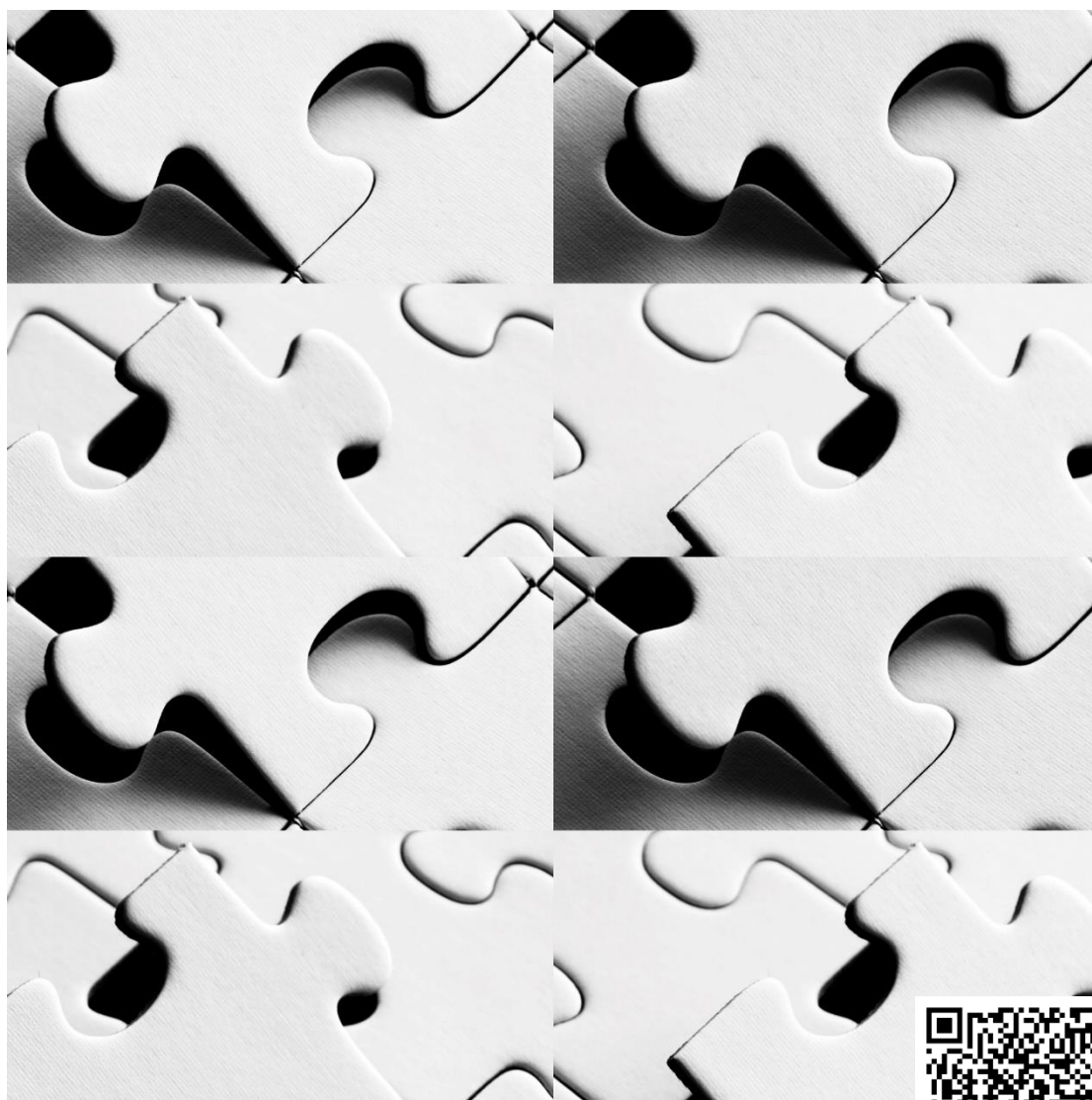


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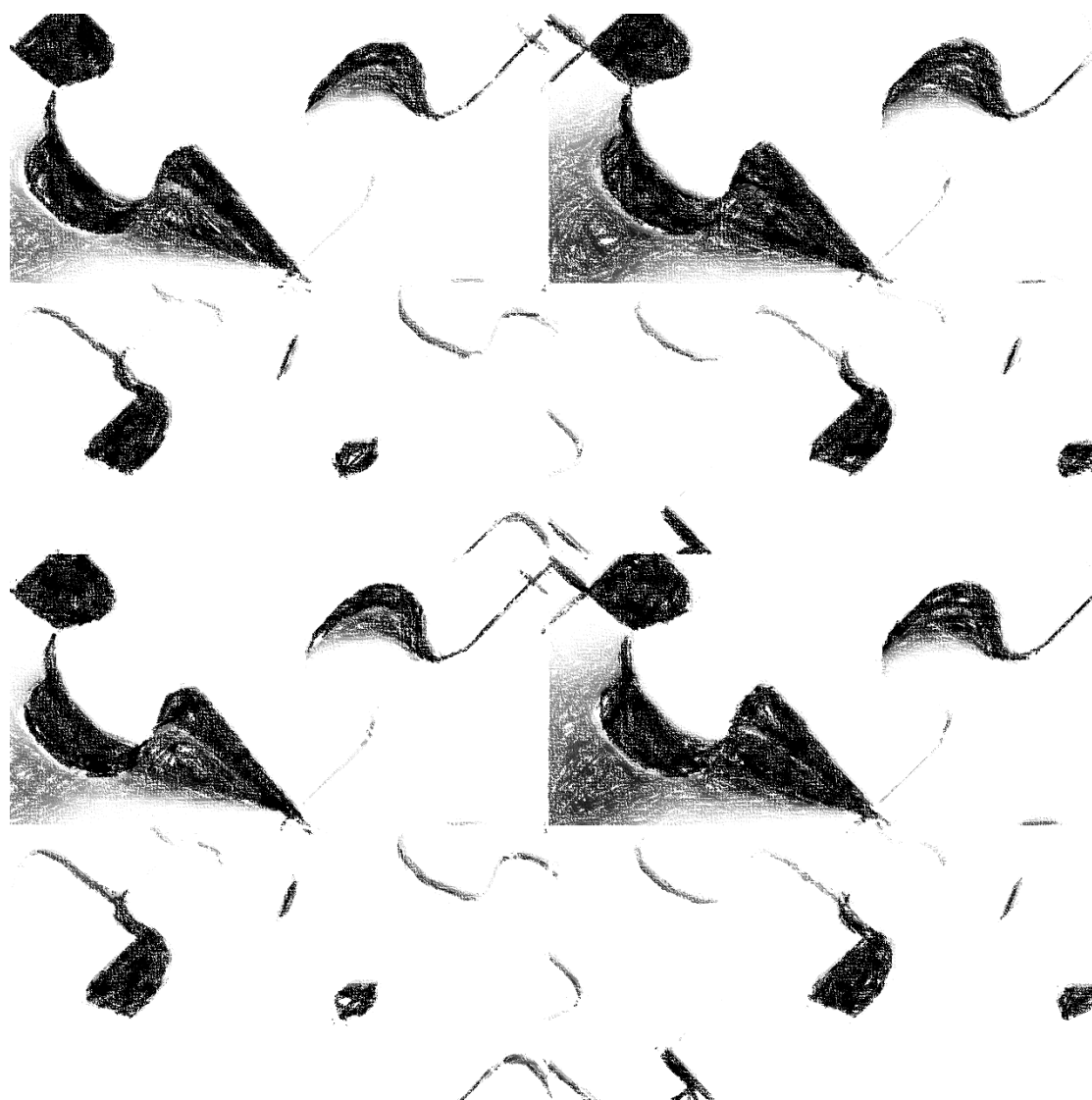
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Matt Purland

Intermediate Level (CEFR B1-B2)

The complete programme for learning connected speech

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Matt Purland

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Material for further study

Here are some selected resources for teaching and learning English pronunciation by the same author:

*(Note: all of the following material is **free** to access and download and in the [public domain](#).)*

Books:

- [Talk a Lot Elementary Book 1](#)
- [Talk a Lot Elementary Book 2](#)
- [Talk a Lot Elementary Book 3](#)

- [Talk a Lot Intermediate Book 1](#)
- [Talk a Lot Intermediate Book 2](#)

- [Talk a Lot Foundation Course](#)
- [Clear Alphabet Dictionary](#)
- [Stress, Reduce, Merge](#)
- [Talk a Lot Elementary Handbook](#)

Online courses:

- [Hard Words](#)
- [Learn Connected Speech](#)

Other free material:

- [Connected speech resources](#)
- [Lesson 5.7 Connected Speech](#)
- [The 48 Sounds of English](#)
- [Word Stress](#)
- [Sentence Stress](#)
- [Word Order](#)
- [Pronunciation resources](#)

Video Classes

- [Connected Speech Club](#) (YouTube)
- [Learn Connected Speech: original 8-part video course](#) (YouTube)
- [Learn Connected Speech: course for British Lingua, Delhi, India](#) (YouTube)

- [Purland Training](#) – channel on YouTube

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About the author

Matt Purland



[Matt Purland](#) is an English teacher and ELT material writer from Cambridge in the UK.

He has been teaching English full-time and writing course books since 2002.

He has written and published 30 ELT books – including the popular *Big Grammar Book* – as well as thousands of printable worksheets. All his material is in the public domain and free to download from [PurlandTraining.com](#).

His qualifications include a BA Honours degree in Drama from the University of Wales and the Certificate in Education from the University of Derby.

He has been teaching connected speech in English for over sixteen years.

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Introduction

Hi there!

I'm really excited to welcome you to this brand new course for learning connected speech in English! This is a new 8-part pronunciation course. The aims of the course are to:

- understand what connected speech is and why it is important
- be able to perform the four main actions of connected speech
- learn and practice the little-known techniques of connected speech
- feel more confident in using spoken English to communicate
- better understand native speakers when they speak English

This course has been online at PurlandTraining.com since August 2023. The online course features downloadable PowerPoint slides, interactive quizzes, and audio recordings of each unit, as well as discussion questions, practice activities, and links to relevant additional information. This is the first time that the course has been collected together and published in book form. In collating the course into this book, I have slightly revised it, where required, but it is essentially the same material. You can work through each unit at your own pace, accessing the online recordings and other resources [here](#), or work with an experienced teacher who will be able to guide you through the course. The course features 50 quizzes to test your comprehension. Answers are provided at the back of the book (p.189).

The course may be adapted and used with students at any level, but the text of this book is aimed at learners from CEFR B1 Pre-intermediate Level and above.

This course is **100% FREE** and in the **Public Domain**, so please feel free to share it with your friends and colleagues. This means that anybody can use the course for commercial or non-commercial purposes – without requiring permission. Like all my teaching material published on PurlandTraining.com, this course is free (gratis) and free (libre).

I have written it in plain English, using British English, and trying to avoid the traditional jargon associated with pronunciation and connected speech wherever possible. There is a helpful glossary of terms from p.11.

I started teaching and writing about connected speech with the [Talk a Lot](#) series of books for Elementary and Intermediate learners, which I published between 2008-2012. Finding the topic to be fascinating, I wrote more about pronunciation in the years that followed, with [Talk a Lot Foundation Course](#) (2011), [Clear Alphabet Dictionary](#) (2012), and [Stress > Reduce > Merge](#) (2012) continuing the journey. (See Material for further study on p.8.) I returned to the topic of spelling and sounds in English with the popular free online course [Hard Words](#) in 2022, and decided to focus on connected speech again, when I began the series of free YouTube classes called [Connected Speech Club](#). Discussing connected speech online every week led to the creation of this course the following year.

In the summer of 2023, I published the course and live-streamed the [original eight-part course](#) on my [YouTube channel](#), later teaching the same course online with a group of learners from [British Lingua](#), a chain of schools based in British Lingua, Delhi, India. Grateful thanks to all my learners who have been trialling this material with me and learning to use connected speech. May you too benefit from this free course and learn to speak English better.

If you have any comments or questions about this course, I would love to hear from you. You can contact me via the contact page at PurlandTraining.com.

I hope that you too will **believe** in the power of connected speech!

With warm greetings,

Matt Purland *Ostróda, Poland, 15th May 2024*

Learn Connected Speech

Glossary of terms

adding sounds

In order to get a VC or friendly connection, we add a vowel sound – w, y, or r – in a VV connection, e.g. 'go out' > 'go wout', 'see any' > 'see yany', and 'teacher is' > 'teacher ris'.

bad connection

CC, CV, and VV connections.

blend

Two or three letters which are pronounced together without being separated by a vowel sound. For example, 'tr' in train (initial consonant blend) and 'ft' in 'left' (final consonant blend).

CC connection

A consonant to consonant sound connection, e.g. 'hot dog'. This is a bad connection because it is difficult to pronounce.

C-C syllable shape

A syllable that starts with a consonant sound and ends with a consonant sound, e.g. 'get'. This is a bad syllable shape, because we can only make a VC connection on the left-hand side.

changing sounds

A voiced consonant sound changes to an unvoiced consonant sound when it moves forward in a CC connection, e.g. the voiced g changes to the unvoiced k: 'big day' > 'bi kday'.

connected speech

The process of connecting syllables together in a sentence as you speak, using the following techniques: moving forward consonant sounds, deleting consonant sounds, adding consonant sounds, and changing voiced consonant sounds into unvoiced consonant sounds.

consonant blend

A combination of two or more consonant sounds which are heard together in a word, e.g. 'nt' in 'want' and 'nd' in 'friend'. These are both *final* consonant blends.

consonant letter

There are 21 consonant letters in English: 'b', 'c', 'd', 'f', 'g', 'h', 'j', 'k', 'l', 'm', 'n', 'p', 'q', 'r', 's', 't', 'v', 'w', 'x', 'y', and 'z'.

consonant sound

There are twenty-five consonant sounds in spoken English (see p.28). Consonant sounds are made when we move our tongue, lips, and mouth into different positions before releasing breath from our lungs. There are fifteen **voiced** consonant sounds (we can feel our *vocal cords* moving when we make them):

| | | | | | |
|---|-------|----|---------|----|----------|
| b | bag | m | music | v | van |
| d | dice | n | nurse | w | week |
| g | glass | ng | ring | y | yoghurt |
| j | jam | r | road | z | zip |
| l | lake | th | brother | zz | revision |

and there are ten **unvoiced** consonant sounds (we can't feel our vocal cords moving when we make them):

Learn Connected Speech

Glossary of terms

| | | | | | | | |
|----|----------------|----|---------------|----|--------------|----|------------------|
| ch | che ese | hh | l o ch | s | s now | tt | th ousand |
| f | f rog | k | k it | sh | sh op | | |
| h | h ead | p | p ig | t | t axi | | |

content word

A key word in a sentence, e.g. a verb, noun, adjective, or adverb, which has a specific meaning when read on its own.

contraction

This occurs when two words merge together to make a single word, e.g. 'it is' becomes 'it's'.

CV connection

A consonant to vowel sound connection, e.g. 'put **o**n'. This is a bad connection because it is difficult to pronounce.

C-V syllable shape

A syllable that starts with a consonant sound and ends with a vowel sound, e.g. '**g**o'. This is the best kind of syllable shape, because we can make a VC connection on both sides.

deleting sounds

In order to get a VC or friendly connection, we sometimes delete the consonant sounds t, d, h, and duplicate sounds in a CC connection, e.g. old **m**an > ol **m**an.

digraph

A combination of two letters that represent one sound, e.g. 'ea' usually represent the long vowel sound ee, as in pl**ea**se, but can also represent the short vowel sound e, as in 'h**ea**d'.

diphthong

A vowel sound comprised of two vowel sounds, i.e. a double sound. There are 10 diphthongs in spoken English (see *vowel sound*).

duplicate sound

When two of the same sounds meet in a sound connection, the first sound is always deleted. This is a duplicate sound, e.g. the first g in 'big **g**ift' > 'bi **g**ift'.

embedded schwa sound

This occurs when we pronounce a consonant sound on its own and a schwa sound naturally follows, e.g. b, f, or t. For example, in the word 'today' – pronounced t Deɪ – the consonant sound t has an embedded schwa sound, because it is pronounced on its own: t.

friendly connection

When one of four consonant sounds – l, m, n, and ng – meets another consonant sound in a sound connection, e.g. 'feel **g**ood'. Along with VC connections, friendly connections are good connections because they are easy to pronounce.

friendly consonant sound

A consonant sound that is easy to pronounce when followed by another consonant sound. The friendly consonant sounds are: l, m, n, and ng.

Learn Connected Speech

Glossary of terms

function word

A grammar word that is usually unstressed, which performs a function in a sentence, e.g. an article ('a', 'an', 'the'), conjunction ('and', 'but', etc.), or preposition ('in', 'on', etc.), and does not have a specific meaning when read on its own.

glottal stop

A glottal stop is not a sound but rather an action – the sudden cutting-off of a vowel sound just after making it, instead of letting it run on. We hear a glottal stop as a tiny gap in the flow of speech; for example, in the phrase 'hot dog' > ho_ dog. A glottal stop is indicated in the text by an underscore: _.

good connection

A VC or *friendly connection*.

homophone

A word that has exactly the same sounds as another word, but a different spelling and a different meaning, for example, 'son' and 'sun' and 'bean' and 'been'.

intonation

The way our voice rises and falls during a sentence when we strongly stress one or more particular words in order to emphasise that part of it.

L1

A learner's native language.

moving forward

In order to get a VC or friendly connection, we move forward certain consonant sounds in a CV connection, e.g. put on > pu ton, and also in a CC connection, e.g. top day > to pday.

multiple actions

If one action is not enough to get the needed VC or friendly connection, we may need to use multiple actions, e.g. in the phrase 'last night' we delete t and then move forward s to get a VC connection, which is much easier to pronounce: 'la snight'.

phonetic language

A language comprising words that are pronounced as they are spelled. English is not a phonetic language, with the exception of a few – generally monosyllabic – words, like: 'fan', 'tent', and 'wet'.

polysyllabic word

A word containing more than one *syllable*.

prefix

Letter(s) at the beginning of a word that create a new word, e.g. 'view' plus the prefix 're' = 'review'. A prefix gives extra information about the meaning of a word, e.g. 're' means 'again', so 'review' can mean to look at something again.

reduplicative

A compound word that has a repeated part or other internal rhyme, e.g. 'bye bye' and 'walkie-talkie'.

Learn Connected Speech

Glossary of terms

regular verb

Verbs that have regular '-ed' endings for their past tense and past participle forms, e.g. the verb 'look': (you) looked (past tense) and (you have) looked (past participle).

schwa sound

The schwa sound – written in the text as **uh** – is the most common sound in English, often occurring in weak-stressed syllables, e.g. 'a', 'the', '-tion', and the weak forms of 'to', 'for', and 'you'.

sentence stress

The sequence of stressed and unstressed syllables in a spoken sentence.

silent letter

A letter which appears in the spelling of a word, but is not pronounced, e.g. the letter 'b' in 'lamb**b**'.

sound connection

The place between two syllables where two sounds meet. There are four possible kinds of sound connection: VC (vowel sound to consonant sound), VV (vowel sound to vowel sound), CV (consonant sound to vowel sound), and CC (consonant sound to consonant sound). VC sound connections are the only good sound connections, because they are easy to pronounce.

sound spine

The sequence of vowel sounds on the stressed syllables in a sentence. These sounds are the most important sounds in the sentence – the sounds that the listener needs to hear in order to correctly process the words. They form the 'backbone' of the sentence – hence 'sound spine'. For example, in the sentence, 'I went for a walk in the park', the sound spine consists of the three stressed vowel sounds: e, or, ar.

standard pronunciation

Standard pronunciation is a neutral form of pronunciation, which is not influenced by any specific English accent. Also known as Received Pronunciation (RP), standard English can usually be heard when you listen to the news or current affairs programmes on a British TV or radio channel.

stressed syllable

One syllable in each content word that has greater stress than all of the other syllables. We pronounce this syllable a little louder – more strongly – than the others. A function word can also be stressed, for example, at the end of a sentence: 'I didn't tell her.'

stress-timed language

English is a stress-timed language, which means that it should be spoken with its familiar rhythm, e.g. du DUH du DUH du DUH du DUH. The stress pattern is like a mountain range, with the strong stresses being the peaks, and the weak stresses the valleys. The contrast between weak and strong makes the distinctive rhythm of English.

suffix

A word ending which occurs in many different words, e.g. '-ing' in 'going' or '-er' in 'teacher'. Suffixes are not normally stressed, although a few common ones are, including: '-ee' ('trainee') and '-ese' ('Chinese').

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Glossary of terms

syllable

A syllable is part of a word that can be said in one beat, e.g. the word 'potato' has three syllables, which gives it three beats: po-ta-to. The middle syllable is stressed: p Tei teu. Every syllable in English has one vowel sound.

syllable breaking

The process of splitting up a *polysyllabic word* into syllables. It is better to break a word into syllables so that the connections are either VC or *friendly*, e.g. in the word 'important' we break it here: 'im por tant' – with a friendly consonant sound m before the second syllable: 'im por', then a VC connection: 'por tant'. It would be counterproductive to break the syllables like this, for example: 'im port ant' because you would end up with two CV connections – 'im port' and 'ort ant', which, as bad connections, need to be corrected.

syllable shape

Defined by whether the syllable starts and ends with a vowel or consonant sound, e.g. 'at' has the syllable shape V-C, because it starts with a vowel sound a and ends with a consonant sound t.

syllable-timed language

In a syllable-timed language, each syllable has roughly an equal amount of stress. Syllable-timed languages include French and Spanish. English should not be spoken with equal stress.

unvoiced consonant sound

A consonant sound is unvoiced when the *vocal cords* in your voice box (larynx) do not vibrate while making it. There are ten unvoiced consonant sounds in English. (See *consonant sound*.) There are eight **voiced** and **unvoiced consonant pairs** – e.g. g and k – which are essentially the same sound, only with a voiced and unvoiced version. (See [Unit 4.2](#).)

VC connection

A vowel to consonant sound connection, e.g. 'we can'. This is a good connection because it is easy to pronounce. It is the only good sound connection.

V-C syllable shape

A syllable that starts with a vowel sound and ends with a consonant sound, e.g. 'it'. This is the worst kind of syllable shape, because we cannot make a VC connection on either side.

voiced consonant sound

A consonant sound is voiced when the vocal cords in your voice box (larynx) vibrate while making it. There are fifteen voiced consonant sounds in English. (See *consonant sound*.)

vowel letter

There are five vowel letters in English: 'a', 'e', 'i', 'o', and 'u'. The consonant letter 'y' is sometimes referred to as a vowel letter.

vowel sound

There are twenty-three vowel sounds in spoken English (see p.28). Vowel sounds are made when we allow breath to move freely from our lungs out of our mouths, without blocking it with our tongue, lips, or mouth (as we do with consonant sounds).

There are eight **short** vowel sounds:

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Glossary of terms

a bat
e leg
i dish

ii happy
o sock
u cup

uh arrive (schwa sound)
uu pull

...five **long** vowel sounds:

ar star
ee three

er shirt
oo shoot

or ball

...and ten **diphthongs** (see above):

ai time
aiy hire
au cow
auw power

ei plane
eir pear
eu home
iy here

oy toy
uuw pure

VV connection

A vowel to vowel sound connection, e.g. 'go in'. This is a bad connection because it is difficult to pronounce.

V-V syllable shape

A syllable that starts with a vowel sound and ends with a vowel sound. It is often a single vowel sound, e.g. 'a' – **uh** – 'I' – **ai** – and 'owe' – **eu**. This is a bad syllable shape, because we can only make a VC connection on the right-hand side.

vocal cords

Folds of tissue in the throat which vibrate to produce sounds when air passes through them. Part of the larynx (voice box).

weak form

One-syllable function words often have weak forms, which should be used in spoken English instead of their strong forms. For example, the weak form of the preposition 'for' is pronounced simply f – with an *embedded schwa sound* at the end – rather than the strong form 'for', which sounds like the number 'four'. The preposition 'to' has the weak form t – also with an *embedded schwa sound* – rather than the strong form 'too'/'two', which either sounds like an adverb or a number, causing confusion in the sound spine.

word stress

Every content word in English has one strong stress, e.g. in the word 'doctor' the first syllable is stressed: 'doctor'.

How the Alphabet Made English

Course Summary

The English Language Delegation, on behalf of English native speakers, have chosen twenty-six letters and tasked the Alphabet Supervisor with organising them into an English language that can be both written and spoken in their desired way. The Alphabet Supervisor calls the group of nervous letters into the main hall:

There are 26 letters in the English alphabet.

OK. Is everybody here? **There should be twenty-six letters.**

[The English Alphabet](#)

OK. There's one missing. Oh, T. Could you be more punctual, in future, please? OK, we're here to make the English language. Not British English – what is that? What is British? Scots, Welsh, Irish? No, we're here to make English. Not American English or any other variant, but English – the language of the English people. That's our job today. And we're tasked with making standard English. So not any slang forms or odd dialects, but **standard English**. The gold standard by which all other Englishes must be judged. Please bear with me. I'm going to tell you how we're going to do it.

This course concerns standard English, as spoken in England.

If you are involved in making other languages too, please forget about them for now. We are only focusing on Standard English for the English people. English English if you like. Or, if you don't like.

You are twenty-six letters. We're not going to use all of you, I'm afraid. Some of you will have to go home. Sorry about that. **There are too many letters – and too many consonant letters**, that's for sure. I've been negotiating with the Head of the ELD, and they have chosen you letters to make both their written language and their spoken language. The problem is that they insist on two very different forms: a very beautiful, elegant written language that they can use to write poetry and long, important documents, but at the same time they want the same letters to create a spoken English which is absolutely like a baby language: BA BA BA BA, **with every syllable forced into a strict up and down stress pattern.**

There are 21 consonant letters in English, which is unequal compared to how many vowel letters there are (5).

English is a stress-timed language.

[Word Stress](#)
[Sentence Stress](#)

There are too many letters here, too many consonant letters and not enough vowel letters. **We've only got five vowel letters.** We have been given a very difficult hand. So, it can't be a phonetic language. The way it's written will be totally different to how it is spoken. How can we achieve both goals with the same letters? They propose making the spoken language by using four main actions:

The four actions of connected speech.

1. moving forward consonant sounds
2. deleting consonant sounds
3. adding consonant sounds
4. changing consonant sounds

[Unit 1.3](#)

I have spoken to the delegation at length, and I believe I know what they mean and how they want us to do this, but each letter will need to play their part. I'm going to talk to each group in turn, so please take a seat in the waiting room until I call you in.

Vowels:

A E I O U

Y is sometimes referred to as a vowel letter.

OK, can I speak to the five vowels first, please? **A, E, I, O, and U**. Yes, Y, can I help you? OK, yes – sometimes you will be used to create a vowel sound, but so will other consonant letters. Can you wait outside for now, please. No – wait in the waiting room. You will have an important job to do. Don't worry. I will tell you later.

There are 23 vowel sounds and 25 consonant sounds in English.

OK – vowels. You are going to have the most wonderful range of sounds, but there aren't enough of you to make them. They have requested **twenty-three different vowel sounds**. Yes, twenty-three. I mean, five letters cannot represent twenty-three different sounds, without us being creative. Why do they need so many vowel sounds? I don't know. I asked them and they said they wanted to create a musical, melodic language; they want to sing; they want to rhyme words, but also have a spoken language which is like a baby babbling, and, at the same time, have a beautiful-looking, elegant written language that will be the envy of all the other languages in the world. So, they're very confused. And big-headed, really.

[The 48 Sounds of English \(PDF\)](#)

A digraph is a combination of two letters that represent one sound.

We can do it if we represent vowel sounds in other ways, so, **apart from being A, E, I, O, and U, you can be digraphs**, so two letters together. Like, **E on its own can be a short E sound** while two EEs together or EA will represent the long EE sound that they want in words like MEET and TEA. The same for single O and double OO. Do you get it? I'll send you a memo about it next week. **Vowel + R** will make a long sound. **Vowel + other consonant letters**, like G and H, will make a variety of sounds. Yes – G and H. OK, sorry. But what else can I do? We'll have **spelling rules**, like **VCV rule** – the first vowel is long when followed by a consonant and vowel letter – as in 'lake' – and **VCC rule** where the vowel is short because it's followed by two or more consonant letters – as in 'lack'. You'll get the hang of it! Chin up!

[How to Spell the 23 Vowel Sounds in English \(PDF\)](#)

Ways that vowel letters represent vowel sounds:

- one letter
- digraphs
- vowel + r
- vowel + other consonant(s)
- spelling rules

The goal in spoken English is to speak with only VC and friendly connections.

The sound spine is the sequence of stressed vowel sounds in a sentence. It helps us to understand the meaning of the sentence quickly, so it should be heard clearly.

In vowel to vowel (VV) connections, we add a consonant sound – r, w, or y – to make it a VC connection.

The 4 friendly consonant sounds are: l, m, n, ng.

The schwa sound is a weak vowel sound found in unstressed syllables. Despite being very common, it has no dedicated letter. It is represented by the vowel letters and a few consonant letters, e.g. 'r' in 'er'.

The syllable connections in polysyllabic words are usually VC or friendly.

The friendly consonant letters represent the four friendly consonant sounds: l, m, n, ng.

In fact, your role is crucial. What they want to do is have a vowel sound at the end of every syllable, meeting a consonant sound at the beginning of the next syllable. VC – vowel to consonant connections. Every time, without exception. Yes, this is how they'll get the BA BA BA BA baby language. So, that's what we're aiming for, folks. The vowel sound on each stressed syllable is going to be the most important. OK, but don't let it go to your heads, OK? Together this sequence of stressed vowel sounds makes up what they call the sound spine. That's the primary way that they want to get the meaning of the sentence – from this string of vowel sounds. Nothing should distract from it, especially not consonant sounds, like T or D. Well, we'll come to *them* later. And H.

Er, if the next sound after you is a vowel sound, we have to insert a consonant sound before it to make the VC connection – R, W, or Y. I've chosen these letters to help, and we're scheduled to meet at the end of this session. There will also be times when we have to use a friendly consonant sound at the end of a syllable, instead of a vowel sound, but they're coming in next, after you.

OK, I've saved the craziest part until last. They are requesting one particular vowel sound that will appear in every sentence – in most words if I'm being truthful – and it's called the schwa sound. This sound will be used in most of the weak-stressed syllables. I pushed and pushed for a single letter dedicated to representing the schwa sound, but they said no. Emphatically. I fought and fought, but they just laughed perversely at the chaos that their decision will no doubt cause. They said that you vowel letters could represent the schwa sound and there'd be no need for a dedicated letter. Twenty-six is their maximum. So, you'll have to make it, for example: A in again, E in open, I in April, O in aeroplane, U in album, and, yes, Y in vinyl. And so on! Yes, A? Do you have a question? What about internal syllable connections in polysyllabic words? Er, words with more than one syllable? Well, yes. That is a good question. Most of the time they will make sure that these connections are VC or friendly. Don't worry. There may be the odd exception, like the connection in PART NER, but, they'll smooth it over. Here they will just delete T and add a glottal stop. More of which later.

Anyway, I feel like it's a big ask, but I believe in you, vowels, and I know you can do it! Please call in the friendly consonant letters. Er, L, M, N, and G. Thank you.

[Unit 1.2](#)

[Unit 2.1](#)

[Unit 1.4](#)

[Unit 1.5](#)

[Unit 7.1](#)

[Unit 3.1](#)

[Unit 3.3](#)

[The Schwa Sound](#)

[How to Spell the 23 Vowel Sounds in English \(PDF\)](#)

[Unit 7.3](#)

[Unit 2.2](#)

[Unit 3.1](#)

[Unit 3.3](#)

Friendly Consonants:

L M N G

n is the most frequently occurring friendly consonant sound.

ng is immovable, because it doesn't move forward in either CV or CC connections.

If there is a friendly consonant sound in a syllable, we can rest on it, instead of going back further to the vowel sound in the syllable.

A glottal stop occurs when we close the glottis in the voice box for a fraction of a second, creating a tiny pause in the flow of air. A glottal stop always replaces T in a CC connection if the preceding sound is a vowel or friendly consonant sound.

It's easy to pronounce any consonant sound after a friendly consonant sound.

Friendly consonant sounds move forward in CV connections, except NG, which remains.

Welcome back, guys. Er, N you are going to have to do a double shift. **You will represent the most common friendly consonant sound**, but also can you work with G in a digraph to create **the immovable friendly sound NG**? Thank you. You are the second most important group in the alphabet, after the vowels, in terms of making the spoken language of English. We need the VC connections between syllables to give us the baby language that they want, the BA BA BA BA, **but sometimes we won't need to get all the way back to the stressed vowel sound in the syllable – we can rest on one of you guys**. That's why you're crucial. I'm going to call you Friendly Consonants, because you will be so helpful.

The drill will go something like this. The word INSTANT meets a consonant sound, e.g. REPLAY and we delete the T but we are still one step away from the vowel sound – a schwa represented by A. We can't delete the N, because then we might lose the meaning of the word (INSTA). So, we rest on N and **employ a glottal stop instead of T**: INSTAN_ REPLAY. Now, it's good. No, I know T won't be happy. I'll speak to him later. Why you? Well, because **you make a neutral shape in the mouth. After pronouncing each of you, the speaker is ready to pronounce any consonant sound**. For example, HOMEWORK. After M in HOME the mouth is not engaged, and therefore is ready to immediately pronounce WORK – or any consonant sound. But if you have T before a consonant, the mouth is fully engaged. You won't distract from the stressed vowel sounds in the sound spine. Look, you'll get the hang of it. Have a look at this pamphlet for more information. **In CV connections – consonant to vowel – you will all move forward** – for example, IN A = I NA – except for NG, which will be immovable. OK? Got it? Any questions? OK, you can go. Thank you. Can you send in the voiced consonant group, please?

[Unit 3.2](#)

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[Glottal Stops](#)

[Unit 6.2](#)

[Unit 3.1](#)

Voiced Consonants:

B D G J V Z

If these voiced consonant sounds appear at the end of a syllable, they must move forward – in CV connections as themselves, but in CC connections each changes to its unvoiced partner.

OK, let me talk to **B, D, G** – you're already here, that's good, er, **J, V, and Z**. The problem is that you are too loud. You can't be at the end of a syllable – full stop! **You'll have to move forward, but in consonant-to-consonant connections we're going to have to team you**

[Unit 4.2](#)

The 8 voiced-
unvoiced consonant
pairs are:

- b – p
- d – t
- g – k
- j – ch
- th – tt
- v – f
- z – s
- zz – sh

th – tt follow this rule
too (p.27.) zz never
appears at the end of
a syllable, so it does
not apply.

In CC connections, T
is always deleted
and usually replaced
by a glottal stop. Its
partner D can move
forward, changing to
T. But if D is in a
blend, e.g. 'nd', or
meets T or D, it will
be deleted.

Z is the least used
letter in written
English.

The voiced
consonant sound z
often appears at the
end of a syllable due
to:

- common
function words
- plural words
- possessive 's'
- contractions
with 'is' and
'has'
- present simple
third person

The sound is z in
CV connections, but
changes to s in CC
connections.
Confusingly, this
sound is always
written as 's' in these
cases.

up with the unvoiced consonant sounds, so that when you do move forward the listeners barely notice you. Look – bottom line – we can't have any consonant sounds distracting from the stressed vowel sounds. That's it. Sorry, but that is all! Your partners will be like this: B will change to P, D to T, G to K, J to CH – a digraph that we will have to make with C and H – V will change to F, and Z to S. In CV connections you can move forward as yourselves, but keep it down. They don't want to hear loud B and G and V all over the place. You know – they want to hear the vowel sounds on the stressed syllables clearly. That's all they want. Strong consonant sounds are right out. OK? Thank you.

D, can I have a word, please? Your partner is T, who is stomping around somewhere angrily, because of... Oh, I don't know! Er, we can't pronounce either of you at the end of a syllable. In CV connections you can both move forward, but in CC T will be deleted every time, and often replaced by a glottal stop. You can move forward changing to T – and be audible, but a very, very light t – in most CC connections. But if you're in a blend you will be deleted, and if you meet T or another D you will also be deleted. So, you're one of three main letters that will often be deleted. How do you feel about that? Well, no. There is nothing you can do about it, D.

A quick word with Z. They're in two minds about you, to be honest. They don't want to write words with Z, apart from odd words like BUZZ or ZIP, so in written English they will rarely use you, making you the least common letter on the page. OK – don't be down. In spoken English you are going to be at the end of syllables a lot. Why? I'll tell you why. They're going to use your sound to make common function words – like 'was', 'is', 'as', 'his', and 'because' – plural words and possessive form – apostrophe S – and in contractions with IS and HAS, which will be very common, and in present simple third person, for example, in GOES. In every verb. So that's a lot of work to do. Each time you will move forward as Z in CV connections – for example, GOES ON = GO ZON – but move forward and change to S in CC connections. For example, GOES WITH = GO SWITH. And so on. Now, you're going to have to work with S and get on with her, OK? All of the aforementioned uses of the Z sound will be spelt as S. Why? I don't know. Ask them yourself! It's another quirk. You have a really important role. Anyway, at least you seem chilled out about it. Which reminds me, they also want to use you in written English to represent sleep: ZZZ.

[Unit 6.2](#)

[Unit 6.3](#)

[Unit 4.4](#)

Redundant Letters:

Q X C

Q is a redundant letter because KW can do the same job.

OK. Now, it's time to make tough decisions. Can I speak with **Q, X, and C** please? First, Q. Now, you are a very beautiful, elegant letter on the page – especially in your upper-case form, I mean – but it turns out we don't really need you to represent sounds. **We can write or say Q with K and W together, for example, QUEEN = KWEEN.** You are redundant. It's also bad news for U, to a lesser degree. Sorry, but... What can I say? You can go home. Go on – off you go.

X is a redundant letter because KS can do the same job.

X – it's the same story for you. While they agreed you are an iconic letter, you have no function either, in written or spoken English. **We can use KS to represent X in writing and speech, for example, FIX = FIKS.** Yes, I agree, it doesn't look as good, but you must understand we have far too many letters as it is – er, too many consonant letters, that is. Like Q, you don't serve any useful purpose in this alphabet, so, off you go. Goodbye. Go and join the Q. Ha ha.

C seems to be redundant because K (hard C) and S (soft C) can do the same job. However, we need C to make digraphs and blends, especially the digraph CH, which is the unvoiced partner of J. As such it is essential, making C invaluable.

Er, C – I can see you are feeling nervous. Now, er, the bad news is that, like Q and X, **we can also use other letters to create your look and sound: K for the hard C sound and S for the soft C.** And it is frankly ridiculous to have you doubling up with K in the digraph CK in BACK. It's like two Ks! You do the same ludicrous trick in words like SCISSORS, when you team up with S in a pointless digraph. Where is the sense in having two S sounds together? So, their first thought was to get rid of you too. I know that looks like a blow. But the good news is that we realised, unlike Q and X, **we do need you. Yes – you will actually make some useful digraphs and blends. Especially teaming up with H to make the CH digraph, which is so important as the unvoiced consonant partner for voiced consonant J.** If only for this, we would have to keep you. Well, we couldn't do it without you. So, you're on the team. OK? Go and take a seat in the waiting room with the others. And please also send in the unvoiced consonants.

[Unit 5.2](#)

Unvoiced Consonants:

F K P S

T is the most frequent letter in written English, but also the most difficult consonant sound to pronounce at the end of syllables, which causes problems.

OK, have we got everyone? **F, K, P, S**... where is **T**? Not here. Hmm. **T is one of the most important players. But the most difficult.** Er, at least I'm now talking with the most sensible group of letters in the alphabet. **The most dependable. You will move forward from the end**

[Unit 6.2](#)

Unvoiced consonant sounds are soft and subtle. They help us in the goal of emphasising the sound spine by reducing hard, loud consonant sounds.

The sound **k** is very light and soft when moving forward.

The sound **p** is almost inaudible when moving forward, but the listener will acknowledge it.

We can pronounce multiple consonant sounds at the beginning of a syllable with ease, but not at the end.

Overly prominent consonant sounds can enter the sound spine in error, distracting the listener from the stressed vowel sounds.

S is the third most frequent letter in written English.

v moves forward and changes to the unvoiced **f** in CC connections.

of the first syllable in a pair as yourselves, without changing, in both CV and CC connections. So that is fantastic. Thank you, guys. You make light sounds at the beginning of the second syllable in CC connections, barely audible, but the listener will know you are there. You don't draw attention to yourselves, unlike the noisy voiced consonant sounds. You're really awesome. You're going to do great work making VC connections sound really nice and professional, without loud crashing consonant clashes. For that I thank you, again. **K** will make just a really light **k** moving forward, for example in **QUICK RUN = QUI CKRUN**. **P** – your moving forward sound will be almost inaudible – just a tiny **p**, like a goldfish pouting. But I know that you like to make gentle almost inaudible sounds, and you are most welcome in our spoken language. You know, at the beginning of words, and in blends, like **CRISPS** and **CRASH**, **K** will have a louder sound, for example. The English are quite happy to pronounce consonant letters at the START of a syllable, whether individually or in blends – even up to **FOUR** consonant letters together, like in the phrase 'crisps were' = **CRI SPSWERE**. But they will not accept consonants at the END of a syllable – except those neutral friendly consonants. In **POWER**, for example, **P** can be a bit more aggressive. But keep in mind our goal of glorifying the stressed vowel sounds. Consonants must know their place and keep their heads down – staying well out of the sound spine.

S – you are going to be very important in written English. I think, the third most frequent letter. Yes, that's right – the third. You will have a lot to do there. Talk to your partner **Z** and he will fill you in on your role. You know, you will do the written bit more and he'll take care of a lot more of the speaking part. That's what it means to have a partner, right? In CC connections – e.g. 'boss will' = 'bo swill' – you will have the chance to be heard – but only very, very lightly. OK? OK, all? Good group. Finally, **F**. You're not going to be used as frequently as other letters and sounds, but you will have an important role to play whenever they pronounce **V** next to another consonant. So that means anything after **OF** or **HAVE**, including everything with Present Perfect tense, which is a very popular tense with the English, believe you me. Working with your partner **V**, you're going to have a lot to do, changing that hard **V** into your very soft and quiet **f** sound. I know you can do it. I believe in you, **F**!

[Unit 4.2](#)

[Lesson 4](#)
[Lesson 5](#)

[Unit 4.6](#)

[Unit 5.3](#)

[Unit 8.6](#)

[Unit 1.4](#)

[Unit 4.7](#)

Unvoiced Consonant:

T

Thanks, unvoiced consonants. Really positive. You can go. Oh, **T**. T. Thanks for coming. Look, it's good I can talk with you on your own, really. The others are just leaving. We need to talk about this problem. Er, the exception is – the problem with this alphabet is you! **They don't want to pronounce you at the end of a syllable when the next sound is another consonant. Yes, in CC connections.** Yes, I know that many of their most common words have T at the end, and that's fine in written English. You're going to be really popular. But they don't want to *pronounce* you. **It's too difficult for them to pronounce T and then make another consonant sound.** They are fully engaged with T. There'll be a gap – and **they don't want any gaps!** In any case, they're planning to use a glottal stop instead. It's the tiniest break – a quarter of a second, that's all. It gives the impression of T without them having to pronounce T. Sorry, but you will always be substituted in CC connections. OK, calm down, T. What, are you threatening to quit? This alphabet needs you! **Look at your role in written English. You're going to be the most frequent letter.** You can't have everything! Don't be greedy, T. You can still be heard at the *beginning* of a syllable... **One of the most popular consonant blends will begin with T. You know, initial blend TR, and what about, er, TW...? It's better than nothing. Oh yes – final consonant blends CT, FT, LT, the list goes on.** But, yes, they won't pronounce you then – in CC connections. OK. I forgot. My bad. **But, what about the fact that you are part of important digraphs like, er, well, along with U you can make the CH sound in words like TUESDAY and TUNA.** That's one of the most important days of the week. And a popular fish. Er, there's a lot for you to do! You know, English people will delete you when you meet another consonant sound, and that's that! Nothing I can do, T. Oh no, now H is here.

[Unit 6.2](#)

T is difficult to pronounce in CC connections, so we delete it and usually add a glottal stop.

Fully pronouncing T next to another consonant sound creates a gap, which is anathema to connected speech.

T is the most frequent letter in written English.

The initial consonant blends with T are: TR and TW. The final consonant blends with T are: CT, FT, LT, NT, PT, ST, XT.

We use T to make digraphs, like TU, which is pronounced ch.

Unvoiced Consonant:

H

OK, **H**, I'm just finishing off with T. OK, T. Just calm down and wait in the waiting room. You have got a massive role to play in this alphabet... just not as much in speaking. Yes, I know it's embarrassing. Er, being deleted. H, I'm talking to T, not you. OK – he's gone. Finally. Yes, that's right, H – sometimes T will be deleted. They just can't

H is routinely deleted at the beginning of function words: him, her, his, as well as others like: he, has, had, at the discretion of the speaker.

Like T, pronouncing H creates a gap, especially when we're trying to run through weak-stressed syllables quickly to get to the next stressed vowel sound in the sound spine.

Some native speakers delete H at the start of every word beginning with H. This is incorrect in standard English.

For various reasons, there are 9 out of 25 consonant sounds that don't meet themselves in this way: j, ch, ng, r, w, y, zz, h, and hh.

manage it. And I want to talk to you, too. H – there are going to be times when you are deleted too. Yes. I'm talking about function words: HIM, HER, and HIS. And it may also happen with other short H function words, like HE, HAS and HAD. Maybe HAVE, although it is more likely to be contracted... Look, these are weak-stressed words and we don't really need to hear a strong H sound at the beginning of them. In phrases like I TOLD HIM, or I TOLD HER, they will naturally delete H to make I TOL DIM and I TOL DER. Yes, I know it sounds awful, but they want to get swiftly on to the next stressed vowel sound to decipher the meaning, by moving quickly over the unstressed function words. The sound spine is KING. How do you feel about that, H? They want to speak syllable by syllable, moving briskly and rhythmically with VC and friendly connections. It creates an unsightly gap, stopping to say H every time. Yes. And I might as well tell you more bad news. Some English people will delete you at the beginning of EVERY word! Like ELLO and ORSE and OPE. But this will not be the done thing in standard English, don't worry. Are other letters deleted, apart from you and T? Well, yes. D is deleted in a blend and when it meets T, and most consonant letters are deleted when they meet themselves. They're called duplicate sounds. For example: BIG GATE, QUICK COFFEE, DANCE SOLO, and so on. In each case the first sound is deleted. No, it won't happen a great deal, but most consonant letters will also know what it's like to be deleted. It's not just you. No, I'm not picking on you. So... T is waving to you from the waiting room door. Go and have a chat with him. My goodness! The stress! The prima donnas!

[Unit 6.4](#)

[Unit 6.5](#)

Voiced Consonants:

R W Y

Can I speak with R, W, and Y, please? I think we've nearly got it. I know it's a lot to deal with in one go, but... You know, we can make this alphabet work – for both written *and* spoken English. I know you can do it! Er... OK, thanks for coming. It seems unlikely, but you guys together have got a really important role to play here. As you may have heard, we're going to need only VC connections – and friendly – between syllables. In VC connections, be whatever vowel sound you represent. However, sometimes another vowel sound will follow the first vowel sound and we'll get a VV connection, which messes everything up, because it's hard for them to pronounce this and it

VV connections occur when a vowel sound at the end of the first syllable in a pair meets another vowel sound at the beginning of the next syllable. They create gaps in the flow of speech, which we must avoid.

[Unit 7.1](#)

[Unit 7.2](#)

Consonant letters, especially R, W, and Y, represent vowel sounds at the end of a syllable, e.g. '-er' and '-or' both represent schwa sounds. However, when they meet another vowel sound, they are activated and become consonant sounds.

Y represents a vowel sound in a limited number of words.

causes a gap. For example, DOCTOR IS. A schwa sound meets short i. They don't want any gaps, but to speak quickly and fluently like BA BA BA BA. So, in this case, although R is working to represent the vowel sound schwa at the end of DOCTOR, **when it meets another vowel sound it becomes ACTIVATED and will be pronounced as a consonant sound: DOCTOR IS = DOCTOR RIZ.** Now the connection is VC – as they wish it to be. Have you got that, R? It's the same for you too, W and Y. You'll do exactly the same. Sit silently at the end of a syllable when you're representing a vowel sound – it'll probably be a schwa sound – and then leap into action, becoming a consonant sound if you meet another vowel sound. You have a majorly invaluable role to play in making VC connections and avoiding gaps. I can't stress that enough! There are further examples, er... HOW IS becomes HOW WIZ – or they could always use a contraction, which would be better, in actual fact: HOW'S – while MY AIM becomes MY YAIM. You'll get the hang of it! Practice, practice! It goes without saying that if you are not busy spelling out a vowel sound, just be your normal consonant selves, right? **Yes, Y, it's true they want to use you as a vowel sound, for example, in GYM, MYTH, and RHYTHM, but it's not going to be very often. OK?** At the end of a syllable, you will be the short ii sound, as in LOVELY, HAPPY, and BABY. You might be the vowel sound ai in a small group of words, like FLY and BYE. OK? But listen, R, W, and Y. I want to remind you that you're just helping out – like all the letters. Don't get big heads, please. You are not better than other consonant letters because you have this unusual role. Right?

OK, we have to hurry, because they want to start using the language as soon as possible – and the Finnish Language Delegation is desperate for us to, er, finish, because they need the hall. Right. Let's get everybody back in here, please. All the letters. Let's get everybody back. Everybody here? Yes, OK, come on in, er, Q and X. I see you're still lurking about. Er, well, yes – you can join us. Look, I want to be fair with all of you. We started off with twenty-six letters and we're going to end with twenty-six. Yes. Er, I've had information... they want to keep Q and X. They find Q to be particularly shapely, especially as an upper-case letter, and they find X quite mysterious and – I don't know why – want to be able to use you to designate something unknown or forbidden. They have decided that *both* of you are iconic letters – especially X. Sorry, Q. I'm just repeating what they told me. Personally, I would have got rid of both of you. Sorry. That's just my

[Unit 7.3](#)

[Unit 7.4](#)

[Unit 7.5](#)

The digraph TH represents two consonant sounds: one voiced – th – and one unvoiced – tt. They can be very difficult to pronounce for foreign speakers who do not have them in their L1, but they can be learned.

opinion, right? So, let's get on with the task at hand... What's that, T? You have come to an agreement with H? You are going to get revenge for being so often deleted in spoken English? How? **By creating the digraph TH – two sounds, both voiced and unvoiced – which will be almost impossible for non-native speakers of English to pronounce?**

OK, yes, you can do that. Fine. But native speakers won't have a problem with *any* digraphs, to be honest... It'll only make things difficult for foreign learners. But they're going to have it tough anyway, so... The thing we are trying to avoid is difficult connections and gaps. So, it seems a bit petty, but OK. It is hardly becoming of a letter that is going to be the MOST COMMON letter in the whole written language... Is it amusing for both of you, T and H? OK. Well, it's the first time I've seen either of you smiling today, so I'll let it go. OK, so TH will join both the voiced and unvoiced consonant groups. Have you got that? Thanks, guys.

Anyway, thank you all. Let's go out and create the very best written and spoken language in the whole world! You have all been chosen – and you all have an important job to do. (Less so, Q and X, but anyway, I digress...) I want to remind you that I believe in you, and I feel proud that the English people have chosen all of you with which to build their important, groundbreaking language. **Remember the absolute and utter all-importance of the sound spine** – and don't let the English people down!

Clear communication via the sound spine is the most important goal of spoken English.

[Unit 5.4](#)

[Unit 1.4](#)
[Unit 1.5](#)

Learn Connected Speech

The 48 Sounds of English – Predicting Actions in Connected Speech

Proposition: for every English sound at the end of a syllable, native speakers know what action to make, whether the next sound is a consonant or vowel sound. Non-native speakers have to memorise the possible actions and practice intensely:

No action: VC □ F □ Actions: MOVE FORWARD □ MOVE FORWARD & CHANGE □ ADD □ DELETE □
 29% 6% 31% 9% 21% 4%

(% of sounds using each action out of 80 possible actions; note: some sounds occur more frequently than others)

| Sound at end of a syllable: | If a consonant sound follows: C | | If a vowel sound follows: V | Examples: | Type: | LCS Unit: |
|---|--|--|--------------------------------|--|--------|-----------|
| 2 exceptional sounds: | | | | | | |
| d | mf; change: t | delete before t or in a consonant blend | mf | head for / need to / mild curry / had a | vo con | 6.3 |
| t | delete; add a glottal stop (GS) | | mf | hot day / hot as | un con | 6.2 |
| duplicate | delete (not j / ch); add GS if t, k, p | | impossible | this singer / N/A | varies | 6.5 |
| 2 important short vowel sounds: | | | | | | |
| uh (schwa) | no action (VC) | | add r or w | a book / pasta is / to a | sh vow | 7.3,5 |
| ii | no action (VC) | | add y | happy to / happy ever | sh vow | 7.4 |
| 6 short vowel sounds that cannot meet another vowel sound: | | | | | | |
| a | no action (VC) | | impossible | pla nning / N/A | sh vow | 7.2 |
| e | no action (VC) | | impossible | e levator / N/A | sh vow | |
| i | no action (VC) | | impossible | li ttle / N/A | sh vow | |
| o | no action (VC) | | impossible | ho tter / N/A | sh vow | |
| u | no action (VC) | | impossible | ru nning / N/A | sh vow | |
| uu | no action (VC) | | impossible | pu tting / N/A | sh vow | |
| 6 consonant sounds that are not heard at the end of a syllable: | | | | | | |
| h | impossible | | impossible | N/A / N/A | un con | 4.3 |
| hh | impossible | | impossible | N/A / N/A | un con | |
| r | impossible | | impossible | N/A / N/A | vo con | |
| w | impossible | | impossible | N/A / N/A | vo con | |
| y | impossible | | impossible | N/A / N/A | vo con | |
| zz | impossible | | impossible | N/A / N/A | vo con | |
| 6 voiced consonant sounds in a pair – change in CC (including d + zz, above): | | | | | | |
| b | mf; change: p | | mf | club night / club at | vo con | 5.3 |
| g | mf; change: k | | mf | log the / log in | vo con | 4.6 |
| j | mf; change: ch | | mf | edge will / edge of | vo con | 5.2 |
| th | mf; change: tt | | mf | bathe with / bathe at | vo con | 5.4 |
| v | mf; change: f | | mf | move the / move it | vo con | 4.7 |
| z | mf; change: s | | mf | lose the / lose a | vo con | 4.4 |
| 7 unvoiced consonant sounds in a pair – do not change (including t, above): | | | | | | |
| ch | mf | | mf | catch some / catch a | un con | 5.2 |
| f | mf | | mf | life was / life in | un con | 4.7 |
| k | mf | | mf | pick the / pick a | un con | 4.6 |
| p | mf | | mf | keep the / keep a | un con | 5.3 |
| s | mf | | mf | pass me / pass out | un con | 4.4 |
| sh | mf | | mf | wish me / wish it | un con | 5.5 |
| tt | mf | | mf | both men / both of | un con | 5.4 |
| 3 friendly consonant sounds – remain in CC: | | | | | | |
| l | no action (F) | | mf | will be / will it | vo con | 5.8 |
| m | no action (F) | | mf | come home / come on | vo con | 5.7 |
| n | no action (F) | | mf | sun cream / sun is | vo con | 5.6 |
| 1 friendly consonant sound – remains in CC and CV | | | | | | |
| ng | no action (F) | | no action (F) | ring them / ring a | vo con | 3.4 |
| 3 normal vowel sounds – create VC connections or add w | | | | | | |
| au | no action (VC) | | add w | how they / how I | diph | 7.5 |
| eu | no action (VC) | | add w | show me / show us | diph | |
| oo | no action (VC) | | add w | new book / new idea | lo vow | |
| 4 normal vowel sounds – create VC connections or add y | | | | | | |
| ai | no action (VC) | | add y | my name / my aunt | diph | 7.4 |
| ee | no action (VC) | | add y | see the / see a | lo vow | |
| ei | no action (VC) | | add y | pay the / pay out | diph | |
| oy | no action (VC) | | add y | toy was / toy is | diph | |
| 8 normal vowel sounds – create VC connections or add r | | | | | | |
| aiy | no action (VC) | | add r | hire me / hire a | diph | 7.3 |
| ar | no action (VC) | | add r | car park / car and | lo vow | |
| auw | no action (VC) | | add r | our book / our aim | diph | |
| eir | no action (VC) | | add r | there was / there are | diph | |
| er | no action (VC) | | add r | her book / her apple | lo vow | |
| iy | no action (VC) | | add r | here we / here are | diph | |
| or | no action (VC) | | add r | or me / or Alan | lo vow | |
| uow | no action (VC) | | add r | fewer cups / fewer of | diph | |

Key: **voiced** consonant sound, **unvoiced** consonant sound, **short** vowel sound, **long** vowel sound, **diphthong**

Lesson 1:

Introduction

Unit 1.1: Sound connections

The aim of this course is to teach you how to use **connected speech** in English, so that you can **sound** more natural and **communicate** more effectively in English.

It will improve your **listening** skills too, because knowing how native speakers use connected speech every day will also help you to understand more quickly what they are saying when they speak.

Native speakers of English speak by **connecting syllables**, rather than words.

We must accept that **spoken English** is totally different to **written English**. When we speak, we mould and distort the words in a way that we do not when we write.

English is not a **phonetic language**. As we will see on this course, we do not speak words faithfully as they are written in the dictionary, but carelessly force them to fit the stress patterns of our speech.

There are four **sound connections** between syllables:

Sound Connections:

VC – vowel sound to consonant sound

CV – consonant sound to vowel sound

VV – vowel sound to vowel sound

CC – consonant sound to consonant sound

The aim is to speak with **easy connections** between syllables.

To find out which sounds are vowel sounds and which are consonant sounds, [click here](#).

Quiz

#1. What is the aim of this course?

- a) To teach you how to use sentence stress in English.
- b) To teach you how to use connected speech in English.
- c) To give you in-depth knowledge of pronunciation in English.
- d) To show you how to use glottal stops.

#2. This course will also improve your _____ skills.

- a) reading
- b) spelling
- c) grammar
- d) listening

#3. Native speakers of English speak by connecting _____.

- a) words
- b) vowels
- c) syllables
- d) sentences

#4. Spoken English is _____ written English.

- a) the same as
- b) totally different to
- c) quite similar to
- d) fairly different to

#5. The four sound connections are:

- a) VV, CV, VV, CC
- b) VC, CV, VV, CC
- c) VC, CV, VC, CC
- d) VC, CC, VV, CC

Discussion

1. What do the words 'connected speech' mean to you?
2. What do you know about connected speech? Have you ever learned about connected speech during an English course? What do you remember? If not, why not?
3. How important is connected speech to you in terms of being able to communicate in English?
4. Why have you decided to do this course? What are your aims/goals? What would you like to achieve by the end of the course?
5. How would you rate your speaking and listening skills in English at the moment?
6. In what ways are spoken English and written English different?
7. Is your L1 a phonetic language? Is it easier to learn a phonetic language than a non-phonetic language?

Practice

1. Write ten words which are phonetic in English [spoken as they are spelled], e.g. 'pan' and 'long'.

Material for further study

- [The 48 Sounds of English](#)
- [Sound Connections](#)

Unit 1.2: VC and friendly connections

VC connections are easy to pronounce. For example:

hi there
more time
go with
new day

They are **good** connections.

The other sound connections – **CV** (consonant to vowel), **VV** (vowel to vowel), and **CC** (consonant to consonant) – are not easy for us to pronounce.

They are **bad** connections.

Some CC connections have **friendly consonant sounds** at the end of the first syllable:

4 Friendly Consonant Sounds:

| | |
|----|------------|
| m | foam party |
| n | bin day |
| ng | long day |
| l | tall guy |

These connections are also **easy** to pronounce.

VC and **friendly connections** make up about 60% of connections in spoken English.

However, that leaves 40% **bad** connections, which are difficult for us to pronounce.

We need to be active in transforming them into good connections: **VC** or **friendly**.

Native speakers do this automatically – it is how we speak – while you have to learn how to do it.

It is preferable to use **contractions** when you speak English, for example:

| | | |
|---------|---|-------|
| She is | > | She's |
| It will | > | It'll |

The **function words** in contractions are not normally stressed, so it does not matter if they get squashed together.

Quiz

#1. This is an example of a VC connection:

- a) a cake
- b) two eggs
- c) hot cakes
- d) an egg

- #2. Which sound connections are not easy for us to pronounce?
- CV, VV, VC
 - CV, VV, CC
 - CC, VV, VC
 - VC, VV, CC
- #3. True or false. Friendly consonant sounds are easy to pronounce.
- True.
 - False.
- #4. _____ are friendly consonant sounds.
- m, n, ng, d
 - m, k, ng, l
 - m, n, g, l
 - m, n, ng, l
- #5. We use connected speech to change bad connections into _____ and _____ connections.
- VC, sound
 - good, friendly
 - VC, friendly
 - VC, good

Discussion

- What are content words and function words? [Find out more here.](#)
- Do you regularly use contractions in spoken English, e.g., 'he's' instead of 'he is'? If not, why not?
- Have you ever learned about VC and friendly connections before? If not, why not?
- Sometimes connected speech feels like a 'best-kept secret' in English. Why do you think that is?

Practice

- Write down 10 new phrases with VC connections, e.g. 'go with'. Practice saying them out loud. Do you find them easy to pronounce?
- Write down 10 new phrases with friendly connections, e.g. 'tall guy'. Practice saying them out loud. Do you find them easy to pronounce?
- Practice reading this [list of contractions](#) out loud. What other English contractions do you know?
- Find a short text in a magazine or online and identify 5 phrases with VC connections and 5 with friendly connections.
- What are 'function words' and 'content words' in English? Write down ten of each. What is their significance in English pronunciation?

Further Study

- [Content Words and Function Words](#)
- [Contractions](#)
- [List of contractions](#)

Unit 1.3: Four actions

We use **four actions** to get good connections every time:

Move forward

Delete

Add

Change

We **move forward** a consonant sound at the end of the first syllable in CV and CC connections to get a VC or friendly connection. For example:

| | |
|-------------|----------|
| look at >> | loo kat |
| CV | VC |
| look for >> | loo kfor |
| CC | VC |

Here are a few more examples:

| | | | | |
|----|------------|------------|---|----|
| CV | had a | ha da | = | VC |
| CV | get in | ge tin | = | VC |
| CC | this pen | thi spen | = | VC |
| CC | book store | boo kstore | = | VC |

We **delete** a consonant sound – usually d or t – at the end of the first syllable in a pair to get a VC or friendly connection. For example:

| | |
|--------------|----------|
| good time >> | goo time |
| CC | VC |

We **add** a consonant sound – w, y, or r – when there is a VV (vowel to vowel) connection. This always immediately gives us a **VC connection**. For example:

| | |
|-------------|--------------|
| play ing >> | play [y] ing |
| VV | VC |

Here are a few more examples:

| | | | | |
|---|---------|-------------|---|----|
| w | few of | few [w] of | = | VC |
| y | say it | say [y] it | = | VC |
| r | four of | four [r] of | = | VC |

We **change** a **voiced** consonant sound into an **unvoiced** consonant sound when it moves forward in a CC connection. For example:

| | | | | |
|-----------|----|-------------|----|---------------|
| have time | >> | ha vtime | >> | ha ftime |
| CC | | VC (voiced) | | VC (unvoiced) |

v and f are a **consonant pair**: v is **voiced** – we hear sound from the **vocal cords** when we say it – while f is **unvoiced** – we do not hear sound from the vocal cords, only sound from air passing through our teeth and lips.

Quiz

#1. The four actions we use to get good connections are:

- a) move forward, delete, add, change
- b) move back, delete, add, change
- c) move again, delete, add, change
- d) move forward, delete, remove, change

#2. look at >> loo kat. This is an example of:

- a) deleting a consonant sound
- b) moving back a consonant sound
- c) adding a consonant sound
- d) moving forward a consonant sound

#3. The consonant sounds we usually delete are:

- a) d and t
- b) d and k
- c) f and t
- d) m, n, ng, l

#4. We can add one of these consonant sounds in a VV connection:

- a) m, y, r
- b) w, y, r
- c) w, y, s
- d) w, g, r

#5. We change a _____ consonant sound into an _____ consonant sound when it moves forward in a CC connection.

- a) friendly, unvoiced
- b) unvoiced, voiced
- c) voiced, voiced
- d) voiced, unvoiced

Discussion

1. How aware were you that we use four actions in connected speech? Do you do anything similar in your L1?
2. Do you think that connected speech is necessary to be understood in English, or is it enough to pronounce each word clearly?
3. How aware were you of the concepts introduced in this unit before taking this course? Is connected speech taught where you go/went to school? If not, why not?

Practice

1. Practice saying the phrases in parts a) and b) – first the bad connection then the good connection. How do they feel to you? Are the VC connections easier to pronounce?

2. Practice the bad and then good connection in part c). Which one is easier for you to pronounce?
3. Practice the bad and then good connection in part d). What is the difference between them?
4. Practice the VV connections in part e). Write down at least three more phrases which connect with w, y, r and practice saying them.
5. Practice moving forward and changing the consonant sound in part f). Do you think it makes a big difference, whether we say 'ha vtime' or 'ha ftime'?

Further Study

- [How to move forward consonant sounds](#)
- [How to delete consonant sounds](#)
- [How to add consonant sounds](#)
- [How to change consonant sounds](#)

Unit 1.4: The sound spine

Why do we do what we do?

The aim of speech is effective communication. In English we achieve this by focusing on the **sound spine**.

The sound spine is the sequence of **stressed vowel sounds** in a sentence. For example:

e ei uu
My friend's been playing football.

The sound spine is: e ei uu

Native speakers gain a lot of the **meaning** of the sentence from these stressed vowel sounds. We do not listen to every sound when somebody speaks to us, but rather try to identify the **sound spine** and pay attention to the **context**.

Our brain puts it together in an instant, and the meaning is clear.

If the sound spine contains the wrong stressed syllables and the wrong stressed vowel sounds, as it often does when many non-native speakers speak English, it can be difficult to understand the message and we may ask:

'Sorry, can you repeat that, please?'

Similarly, if the sentence is cluttered with unnecessary pauses, 'ums' and 'ahs', gaps, and redundant consonant sounds, the stressed vowel sounds can be very difficult to identify.

This also leads to confusion, frustration, and **miscommunication**.

Connected speech helps by **isolating** the stressed vowel sounds and making them easier to hear.

The aims of connected speech, then, are:

1. to reduce the **gaps** when we speak and increase **fluency** by speaking in a continuous way, with syllable flowing into syllable, rather than one individual word at a time, as many people learn to speak English
2. to emphasise the **sound spine** – to make it louder and clearer in the sentence

Quiz

#1. What is the aim of speech?

- a) To say something.
- b) To communicate important information.
- c) Effective communication.
- d) Miscommunication.

#2. What is the sound spine?

- a) Part of the lower back.
- b) The sequence of stressed vowel sounds in a sentence.
- c) One of the main tools for speaking.
- d) Words that connect sentences together.

#3. Why is the sound spine so important?

- a) It helps to connect words together.
- b) It connects our ideas as we use connected speech.
- c) We get a lot of the meaning of the sentence from the stressed consonant sounds.
- d) We get a lot of the meaning of the sentence from the stressed vowel sounds.

#4. The wrong sound spine can cause:

- a) Good communication.
- b) Miscommunication.
- c) A positive response from the listener.
- d) Faster speech.

#5. The aims of connected speech are:

- a) To reduce the gaps when we speak.
- b) To emphasise the sound spine.
- c) To reduce the gaps when we speak and reduce the sound spine.
- d) To reduce the gaps when we speak and emphasise the sound spine.

Discussion

1. What did you know about the sound spine before this course?
2. Give examples of when you have tried to communicate in English but ended up with miscommunication.
3. Why do non-native speakers speak English with gaps between words?
4. Do you have word stress and sentence stress in your L1? Is it a stress-timed or syllable-timed language? How similar is it to English in terms of pronunciation?
5. Do you tend to add a lot of 'um's and 'er's when you speak... a) your L1, b) English? Why do you do that? How can you cut down or stop doing it?

Practice

1. Write five sentences. Mark the stressed syllables in each one. Identify the vowel sound on each stressed syllable. This is the sound spine. Read each sentence emphasising the sound spine.

Further Study

- [The Sound Spine](#)

Unit 1.5: How the four actions help

How do the four actions of connected speech emphasise the sound spine?

Moving forward removes the consonant sound from the preceding vowel sound, giving it room to breathe:

| | |
|------------|---------|
| look at >> | loo kat |
| CV | VC |

Instead of 'look at', with the focus on **k**, the emphasis remains a little longer on the vowel sound **oo**.

Deleting a consonant sound does the same thing, removing the focus from the consonant sound and giving the vowel sound space to be heard:

| | |
|--------------|----------|
| good time >> | goo time |
| CC | VC |

Deleting and then adding a **glottal stop** is even more effective in giving emphasis and space to the vowel sound, because it replaces **t** or **d** – the hardest-sounding consonant sounds – with half a second of silence after the vowel sound. For example:

| | |
|------------|---------|
| hot dog >> | ho_ dog |
| CC | VC |

Adding a vowel sound – **w**, **y**, or **r** – extends the vowel sound, making it longer. Although they are consonant sounds, **w**, **y**, and **r** act as extensions of the vowel sounds that they follow:

| | | | | |
|---|---------|-------------|---|----|
| w | few of | few [w] of | = | VC |
| y | say it | say [y] it | = | VC |
| r | four of | four [r] of | = | VC |

Changing voiced consonant sounds into unvoiced helps the sound spine by suppressing loud and brash consonant sounds, like **g** and transforming them into quiet weak sounds that are barely heard, like **k**:

| | | |
|------------|-------------|---------------|
| big day >> | bi gday >> | bi kday |
| CC | VC (voiced) | VC (unvoiced) |

The unvoiced consonant sound **k** is barely heard, which makes the stressed vowel sound **i** even louder and stronger.

It almost has the effect of *removing* the consonant sound. Certainly, a loud **g** in 'big day' only draws attention to itself, and away from the stressed vowel sound **i**.

When we speak English, everything we do is to emphasise the **sound spine**: from word stress, sentence stress, use of glottal stops, weak forms, schwa sounds, word order, to using **connected speech**.

This course will show you how to use **connected speech** when you speak English and allow you plenty of opportunities to **practice** the techniques of connected speech.

Quiz

#1. Moving forward puts more emphasis on the _____, by removing a consonant sound.

- a) word
- b) vowel sound
- c) sentence
- d) consonant sound

#2. Deleting a consonant sound does _____.

- a) something different
- b) something else
- c) the opposite
- d) the same thing

#3. We increase the emphasis on a vowel sound further by adding a _____.

- a) stressed syllable
- b) vowel sound
- c) glottal stop
- d) schwa sound

#4. Adding a consonant sound – w, y, or r – _____ the vowel sound.

- a) removes
- b) extends
- c) deletes
- d) reduces

#5. A loud voiced consonant sound, e.g. g draws attention to _____.

- a) the vowel sound
- b) the stressed syllable
- c) the glottal stop
- d) itself

Discussion

1. Do you use glottal stops in your L1? Have you ever tried using them in English? Are you willing to learn to make glottal stops, e.g. by studying the process on YouTube or asking your teacher?
2. Does your L1 feature a lot of strong, loud consonant sounds, or do they get reduced, as in English?
3. What do you know about the schwa sound in English? Do you have it in your L1? Did you know there is probably at least one schwa sound in every sentence in English?

Practice

1. Practice all the phrases in this unit, from the bad connections (in red) to the good connections (in green). Which type of connection feels easier for you?
2. Write five more phrases with 'look + word beginning with a vowel sound', e.g., 'look at'. Read them out loud and practice moving forward the k to join the vowel sound.

3. Write five more phrases with 'good + word beginning with t', e.g., 'good time'. Read them out loud and practice deleting d. Don't slow down your pace as you say them, and we won't notice the missing d.
4. Write five more phrases with 'hot + word beginning with a consonant sound', e.g., 'hot dog'. Read them out loud and practice deleting the t and adding a glottal stop.
5. Write five more phrases with 'few + word beginning with a vowel sound', e.g., 'few of'. Read them out loud and practice adding the w sound between the two syllables.
6. Write five more phrases with 'say + word beginning with a vowel sound', e.g., 'say it'. Read them out loud and practice adding the y sound between the two syllables.
7. Write five more phrases with 'four + word beginning with a vowel sound', e.g., 'four of'. Read them out loud and practice adding the r sound between the two syllables.
8. Write five more phrases with 'big + word beginning with a consonant sound', e.g., 'big day'. Read them out loud and practice changing the hard, brash g sound to a light, gentle k.

Further Study

- [Glottal Stops](#)
- [The Schwa Sound](#)
- [Weak Forms](#)

Lesson 2:

VC Connections

Unit 2.1 What are VC connections?

VC connections are **vowel** to **consonant** connections between syllables.

| | | | | |
|----------|----|---------------|-------------------|------|
| • batter | ba | vowel sound a | consonant sound t | tter |
| • better | be | vowel sound e | consonant sound t | tter |
| • bitter | bi | vowel sound i | consonant sound t | tter |
| • butter | bu | vowel sound u | consonant sound t | tter |

VC connections are easy to pronounce. They are **good** connections.

It is physically more **comfortable** for native speakers to pronounce VC connections than the other three kinds of connection.

It is much easier for us to pronounce consonant sounds at the *beginning* of a syllable than at the *end*:

ba ckdoor not back door

After making the vowel sound, our tongue, lips, and mouth are in a neutral position – ready to form any consonant sound.

This is a result of the way our tools for speaking – our mouths, tongues, larynxes, lips, etc. – have grown and developed as we have heard English being spoken since before we were born.

The other three possible sound connections are:

| | | |
|------|------------------------------------|----------|
| • CV | consonant sound to vowel sound | get it |
| • CC | consonant sound to consonant sound | look for |
| • VV | vowel sound to vowel sound | see it |

They are not easy to pronounce and lead to awkward **gaps** between syllables and words.

They are **bad** connections which we change to VC or friendly.

Life would be much easier with only **VC connections** – like BA BA BA BA BA BA – but unfortunately the way our language is spelled forces us to deal with bad connections.

Along with **friendly connections** – syllables ending with the sounds **m**, **n**, **ng**, or **l** – VC connections are good connections.

Good connections occur approximately 60% of the time in everyday English.

Good connections are about four times more likely to be VC than friendly.

It is quite difficult to build a sentence with **only** VC connections:

ba tte ry life
be tter ba tte ry life
for the be tter ba tte ry life
go for the be tter ba tte ry life
how to go for the be tter ba tte ry life
show me how to go for the be tter ba tte ry life
Why do you show me how to go for the be tter ba tte ry life?

Try to build your own sentence with only VC connections!

The aim of connected speech is to make all bad connections VC or friendly.

We do this by **moving forward**, **deleting**, and **adding** consonant sounds as we speak.

Native speakers speak English **syllable by syllable**, connecting syllables by moving forward, deleting, and adding consonant sounds.

If you speak English **word by word** you end up with **gaps** between syllables and words, which will slow down your speech and sound bad to native speakers.

By **connecting** syllables, we remove the gaps between words and our speech becomes fluent.

You can learn to recognise VC connections.

Most will have a **vowel letter** meeting a **consonant letter**:

dri ving
the gate
a bout

However, sometimes the spelling of the vowel sound includes a **consonant letter** at the end of the syllable: '-w', '-y', '-r', and even '-gh':

| | | | |
|----|---------------|-------------|------------|
| w | how nice, | bow ling, | show me |
| y | may be, | py ja mas | say to |
| r | their friend, | car that, | our flight |
| gh | neigh bour | through the | dough was |

They are NOT CC connections. They are all good VC connections.

The letters '-w', '-y', '-r', and '-gh' are **silent** at the end of a syllable in English.

Remember – we are focusing on the sounds rather than the spelling of words.

Quiz

#1. What is a VC connection?

- a) a vowel to vowel connection between syllables
- b) a consonant to vowel connection between syllables
- c) a vowel to consonant connection between syllables
- d) a consonant to consonant connection between syllables

#2. Which phrase has a VC connection between syllables?

- a) with us
- b) to me
- c) to us
- d) with me

#3. VC connections are:

- a) difficult to pronounce
- b) easy to pronounce

#4. True or false: it is physically easier for native speakers to pronounce VC connections, compared to the other three connections.

- a) True.
- b) False.

#5. VC connections and _____ connections are both easy to pronounce, making them good connections.

- a) CV
- b) voiced
- c) VV
- d) friendly

Discussion

1. Are VC connections important in pronouncing your L1?
2. Are you comfortable pronouncing CC, CV, and VV connections in your L1, despite them being bad connections in English?
3. Do you find it easier to pronounce bad connections than good VC and friendly connections in English? If yes, why?
4. Do you have silent letters in your L1? Give some examples of words with silent letters.
5. What do you know about the letters '-w', '-y', '-r' in English? Did you know that they are usually silent at the end of a syllable, unless the next sound is a vowel sound, when they become activated as consonant sounds, e.g., 'how it' = HOW WIT?

Practice

1. Write ten words or phrases with VC connections, e.g., 'ba tter'.
2. Practice the words starting with 'b' at the top of p.43. Enjoy the smooth VC connections.
3. Practice saying nonsense phrases with only VC connections, e.g., 'BABABABABA', 'MAMAMAMAMA', 'BIBIBIBIBI', etc. Hopefully, after completing this course, all your English speech will contain VC and friendly connections.
4. Try to build a normal sentence that makes sense with only VC connections. How easy is it? Do you feel limited? VC connections are usually only one type of connection in regular sentences.
5. Words of more than one syllable usually have VC or friendly connections when we break them into syllables. Write 10 words with three syllables or more that have only VC connections, e.g., A MA ZING. Say them aloud.
6. Practice saying the phrases with good connections on p.43.
7. Write down more English words ending in '-w', '-y', '-r', and '-gh'. Note that these consonant sounds are usually silent at the end of a syllable.

Further Study

- [VC Connections](#)
- [Silent Letters](#)

Unit 2.2 Syllable breaking and contractions

We can break most English words into **syllables** with only VC or friendly connections.

Words that do not break this way may be either compound nouns (two words together) like 'grand **ma**' (CC) or ing form/gerunds where the verb ends in a vowel sound, e.g., 'say **ing**' (VV).

There are not many regular words that cannot be divided into syllables with good connections, but here are two examples:

'part **ner**' (CC) and 'state **ment**' (CC)

So, when breaking up a sentence into **syllables**, try to make VC and friendly connections where possible. It will save you time later!

Our preference for **contractions** like 'wanna' instead of 'want to' is down to our desire for VC connections:

I want **to**
CC

changes to

I wa **нна**
VC

The difficult CC connection with two t sounds meeting becomes an easy **VC connection**.

See also:

I have **got to**
CC CC

changes to

I go **тта**
VC

I am go **ing to**
VV F VV F

changes to

I'm go **нна**
F VC

and don't forget: **gimme** (give me), **lemme** (let me), **hafta** (have to), **dunno** (don't know), **coulda** (could have), **kinda** (kind of), etc.

Quiz

#1. True or false: most words can be broken into syllables with only VC or friendly connections.

- a) True.
- b) False.

#2. Some _____ do not break into good connections because they are two words stuck together, like 'grand ma'.

- a) compound nouns
- b) compound articles
- c) prepositions
- d) sentences

#3. We use _____ to get VC connections, like want to >> wanna.

- a) adjectives
- b) phrasal verbs
- c) connections
- d) contractions

#4. Which word is not a well-known contraction?

- a) kinda
- b) wilma
- c) gimme
- d) hafta

#5. 'I'm gonna' means:

- a) I am going
- b) I'm going to be
- c) I am going to
- d) I am going there (in the future)

Discussion

1. Do you use contractions in English, e.g., 'she is' becomes 'she's' and 'they are' becomes 'they're'? If not, why not?
2. Did you know that native speakers rarely use full forms when they could use contractions – apart from for emphasis? For example, 'NO, IT IS NOT!'
3. Do you think it is 'bad' English to say 'I wanna go out' instead of 'I want to go out'? If yes, why?
4. Were you taught to speak English in full forms only, speaking word by word? If yes, how are you going to 'unlearn' those bad habits?

Practice

1. Write 10 words with three syllables or more that have only VC connections, e.g., TE LE VI SION.
2. Write 10 compound nouns that have bad connections as well as VC connections, e.g., GRAND MO THER.
3. Write ten gerunds that have VV connections instead of VC connections, e.g. SAY ING.
4. Find more words like PART NER and STATE MENT that do not have VC connections, but are not compound nouns or gerunds.

5. Write ten words that have more than one syllable. Break them into syllables using VC and friendly connections. Practice saying them out loud.
6. Practice reading the list of contractions out loud. What other English contractions do you know? How often do you use contractions in English?
7. Write ten sentences containing contractions and practice saying them out loud. The point is that written English is different from spoken English, so we can write 'Give me the phone, because I have to call my friend', but we may say, 'Gimme the phone, 'cos I hafta call my friend'. If you speak English as you write it, your speech will sound stilted and unnatural.

Further Study

- [List of contractions](#)

Unit 2.3 Syllable shapes

Finally, to guarantee VC connections, the **syllable shapes** in a sentence should be C-V – starting with a consonant sound and ending with a vowel sound, for example:

C-V C-V C-V C-V C-V
The new toy for Jay...
VC VC VC VC

Try to continue this sentence with syllables with C-V shapes. It won't be easy, because the words we need, like 'is', 'was', or 'will' do not have C-V shapes. They will cause bad connections, for example:

C-V C-V C-V C-V C-V V-C C-C C-C
The new toy for Jay is great, but...
VC VC VC VC VV CC CC

Some **high-frequency words** which often appear in English have the shape C-V, e.g.

the be to for

Unfortunately, only 31% of the most common high-frequency words in written English have the shape **C-V**.

The remaining 69% are:

- **V-C** e.g., of, and, in
- **C-C** e.g., that, have, with
- **V-V** e.g., a, I, or

Written English, then, is totally different from spoken English.

Non-native speakers try to pronounce each word separately – as carefully and correctly as they can:

The next train will arrive in a minute.

...but it sounds **wrong**.

While native speakers make up '**nonsense**' words as we connect English syllables together:

The ne kstrain willa rye vinna minnit.

...and it sounds **correct**.

We do it automatically, thanks to our long understanding of English.

You have to learn to do it.

And you can!

Quiz

#1. To guarantee VC connections in a sentence, the syllable shapes should be:

- a) V-C
- b) C-C
- c) C-V
- d) friendly

#2. True or false: the syllables in this sentence have only C-V shapes: 'He saw too far'.

- a) True.
- b) False.

#3. Which word below does not have a C-V shape?

- a) for
- b) be
- c) the
- d) him

#4. When C-V syllables meet, they create _____ VC connections.

- a) good
- b) bad
- c) indifferent
- d) friendly

#5. Other syllable shapes, like V-C, _____, and C-C, create problems when we speak, which must be corrected by connected speech.

- a) V-V
- b) C-V

Discussion

1. Have you ever considered the shape of words before, i.e. whether they begin or end with a consonant or vowel sound, and how that affects pronunciation in English?
2. Are you able to learn groups of words with each syllable shape as a way of speeding up the process of using connected speech?
3. Have you become conditioned to speaking English word by word – i.e. incorrectly – through study and practice with poor spoken English modelling? How can you learn to accept and incorporate connected speech into your everyday spoken English?

4. Do you believe that syllables like 'The ne kstrain willa rye vinna minnit' are silly and not 'proper' English? Are you committed to speaking English word by word, or are you open to learning to speak English syllable by syllable?

Practice

1. Write ten words that have a C-V syllable shape, e.g., 'for'. This is the right kind of syllable shape for spoken English. (Think BA BA BA BA BA...)
2. Write ten words that have a V-C syllable shape, e.g., 'of'. This syllable shape will lead to a bad connection on both sides, because VC connections cannot result.
3. Write ten words that have a C-C syllable shape, e.g., 'that'. This syllable shape will lead to a bad connection on the right side only, which cannot produce a VC connection, so it must be corrected.
4. Write ten words that have a V-V syllable shape, e.g., 'a'. This syllable shape may lead to a bad connection on both sides (CV on the left and VV on the right), but definitely on the left side, because the preceding syllable needs to meet a consonant sound, not a vowel sound.
5. Write down lists of common words that have each syllable shape and learn them. For example, 'for' (C-V) is good, but 'and' (V-C) is bad, and so on.
6. Practice saying the two 'train' sentences on p.50. Which one sounds more natural to you? Why?
7. Study the list of high-frequency words – [100 Most Common Words in Written English](#). Group them by syllable shape. Get to know which very common words will cause problems that have to be corrected by connected speech.

Further Study

- [Syllable Shapes \[Video Class\]](#)
- [List of Common One-Syllable Words Ordered by Syllable Shape](#)

Unit 2.4 Practice with VC connections

Practice the phrases which have only VC connections.

Notice how easy they are to pronounce. This is due to using only C-V syllable shapes (excluding the final syllable, at times), which create only VC connections:

1 VC connection:

dri ving
cro ssing
the gate
a bus
a rrive
a bout
air port
our flight
Car diff
cy cle

2 VC connections:

u sua lly
O li ver
de ci ded
fa mi ly
o ffi cer
ma na ger
our daugh ter
far too long
Ro ber to
her cou sins

3 VC connections:

de va sta ted
to ma to soup
re ce ptio nist
spe cta cu lar
show their pa ssports
my si ster was
near Ri ver Road
ma na ger thinks
a fter the storm
the py ja mas

4 VC connections:

u ni ver si ty
a fter we fi nish
the su per mar ket
the mo tor ra cing
are you go nna watch
pro ba bly ta king
ho li day to Greece

5 VC connections:

to go to the ga rage
to mo rrow for the school
to the ci ty mu seum

6 VC connections:

they go to the ci ne ma

7 VC connections:

to the phar ma cy to mo rrow

Quiz

#1. Break this word into two syllables with a VC connection: running.

- a) runn ing
- b) ru nning
- c) r unning
- d) run ning

#2. Break this word into three syllables with two VC connections: holiday.

- a) hol i day
- b) ho lid ay
- c) ho li day
- d) holi day

#3. Which phrase has only VC connections?

- a) to ma to soup
- b) chi cken noo dle soup
- c) len til soup
- d) split pea soup

#4. Which phrase has two VC connections and one VV connection?

- a) our daugh ter was
- b) our daugh ter is
- c) our daugh ters are
- d) our daugh ters were

#5. Break this phrase into three VC connections: teacher training.

- a) teach er trai ning
- b) tea cher train ing
- c) tea cher trai ning
- d) teacher train ning

Practice

1. Practice the phrases with VC connections on pp.53-54. How natural do they feel to you?
2. Write your own phrases containing between 1-7 VC connections. Notice the C-V syllable shapes. Practice saying the phrases aloud. This is how we would like all English speech to sound.
3. Copy sentences from a real text, e.g., a book or news report, and break the words up into syllables. Find phrases with VC connections and repeat them out loud. What is the longest chain of syllables with VC connections you can find?

Unit 2.5 Reduplicatives

Let's have some **fun** to finish!

The following words are **reduplicative rhyming words**, meaning words that have internal rhyme. This kind of word often contains good examples of **VC connections**.

Match each reduplicative with a clue and practice saying them, noticing their VC connections.

Reduplicatives – Quiz 1

laughter romantic farewell crying too perfect
dog noise dance argument stuck up not difficult

1. argy-bargy *noun*
2. boohoo *exclamation*
3. boogie-woogie *noun*
4. bow-wow *exclamation*
5. bye-bye *exclamation*
6. easy-peasy (lemon squeezy) *adjective*
7. goody-goody *noun*
8. ha ha! *exclamation*
9. hoity-toity *adjective*
10. lovey-dovey *adjective*

Reduplicatives – Quiz 2

children's play equipment hello very small ineffectual fantastic
communication device be indecisive a new day overweight carelessly

1. roly-poly *adjective*
2. seesaw *noun*
3. shilly-shally *verb*
4. super-duper *adjective*
5. teeny-weeny *adjective*
6. wakey-wakey *exclamation*
7. walkie-talkie *noun*
8. willy-nilly *adverb*
9. wishy-washy *adjective*
10. yoo-hoo! *exclamation*

Quiz

#1. What is a reduplicative rhyming word?

- a) a word that rhymes with another word
- b) a word that has external rhyme
- c) a word that rhymes with itself
- d) a word that has internal rhyme

#2. Reduplicatives often contain good examples of _____.

- a) VC connections
- b) CV connections
- c) CC connections
- d) friendly consonant sounds

#3. 'boogie-woogie' is a kind of:

- a) consonant sound
- b) dance
- c) table
- d) musical toy

#4. 'teeny-weeny' is an adjective meaning very _____.

- a) big
- b) long
- c) small
- d) nice

#5. If you 'shilly-shally' you behave in _____ manner.

- a) an offensive
- b) an indecisive
- c) a decisive
- d) a formal

Discussion

1. Do you have reduplicative words in your L1? If yes, give some examples. If no, why not?
2. Why do you think reduplicative words – e.g. 'wakey-wakey' (wake up) – developed in English? What purpose do they serve? Who is likely to use them – and when?

Practice

1. Complete the activities on p.56.
2. Make a sentence containing each reduplicative word.
3. Research the topic of reduplicatives and find more of these words online. Put together a list in alphabetical order and learn it. Try to use them naturally when you speak English.
4. Try to build a sentence with more than one reduplicative word and say it aloud, e.g., 'The English test was easy-peasy for the hoity-toity goody-goody!'

Further Study

- [Reduplicatives \[Video Class\]](#)

Lesson 3:

Friendly Connections

Unit 3.1 What are friendly consonant sounds?

In a **friendly connection** the sound at the end of the first syllable is m, n, ng, or l, and the sound it meets is a consonant sound, for example:

| | |
|----|--------------------|
| m | foa m party |
| n | bun n fight |
| ng | long ng day |
| l | tall l guy |

m, n, ng, and l do not move forward in CC (consonant to consonant) connections.

We call m, n, ng, and l **friendly consonant sounds** because they are easy to pronounce with following consonant sounds.

In CV (consonant to vowel) connections the friendly consonant sounds m, n, and l **move forward**, like normal consonant sounds, to create VC connections:

| | | | |
|---|------------------|----|------------------|
| m | foa m on | >> | foa n mon |
| n | bun n in | >> | bu n nin |
| l | tall l er | >> | ta n ller |

However, ng is different because it cannot move forward in CC or CV connections. It always stays in place, like an immovable rock:

| | |
|---------|-----------------------|
| ng (CV) | long n evening |
| ng (CC) | long ng day |

Along with **VC connections**, friendly consonant sounds provide us with **good** sound connections.

Friendly consonant sounds are equally as easy to pronounce as VC connections.

Compare:

| |
|-----------|
| be tter |
| home work |

However, **friendly connections** are not **VC connections** – they do not make a vowel to consonant connection – but they work with VC connections to make our sentences easier to pronounce.

Do not make the mistake of labelling all **good** connections as friendly. Only about 20% of good connections are friendly, while the other 80% are VC connections.

Together the **good** connections total around 60% of all connections in English. The other 40% are **bad** connections and have to be changed by the speaker manually into either VC or friendly connections.

Native speakers do this automatically, while non-native speakers need to learn how to do it by practice.

Friendly consonant sounds are easy to pronounce next to consonant sounds because after saying **m**, **n**, **ng**, or **l**, our mouth and tongue are in a neutral position, ready to pronounce any consonant sound.

The tongue can rest on **m**, **n**, **ng**, or **l**, without having to link it to the first sound of the next syllable.

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| syllables ending in m | <i>tongue is down, mouth is closed</i> |
| syllables ending in n | <i>tongue is ready, mouth is closed</i> |
| syllables ending in ng | <i>tongue is down, mouth is closed</i> |
| syllables ending in l | <i>tongue is ready, mouth is closed</i> |

Compare this with a **bad** CC connection: hot **d**ay

At the point of saying **t**, the tongue is fully engaged, and the mouth is open. We are in no way ready to begin the next consonant sound – **d** – so there will be an awkward connecting sound followed by a gap before the next word:

hot **d**ay

In fact, it would be difficult to even *try* to move forward friendly consonant sounds in a CC connection. Try saying these phrases, moving forward the friendly consonant sounds:

| | | |
|--------------------|----|--------------------|
| Tom h ad | >> | To m had |
| nan w as | >> | na n was |
| ring c ould | >> | ri n gcould |
| well d one | >> | we l ldone |

It is more comfortable to leave them in place. For **ng** it is frankly impossible to move forward.

However, as we have seen, we do move forward **m**, **n**, and **l** in **CV connections**.

Friendly consonant sounds cannot appear in **VV (vowel to vowel) connections**, because, by definition, the two sounds have to be vowel sounds.

Quiz

#1. The four friendly consonant sounds are:

- a) m, p, ng, l
- b) m, n, ng, l
- c) m, n, k, ng
- d) m, n, ng, t

#2. Like VC connections, friendly consonant sounds enable _____ sound connections.

- a) friendly
- b) different
- c) good
- d) bad

#3. True or false: friendly consonant sounds do not move forward in CC connections.

- a) True.
- b) False.

#4. True or false: every friendly consonant sound moves forward in CV connections.

- a) True.
- b) False.

#5. After pronouncing a friendly consonant sound as the first sound in a _____ connection, our mouth and tongue are in a _____ position, ready to pronounce the next consonant sound.

- a) CV, neutral
- b) CC, neutral
- c) neutral, CC
- d) sound, neutral

Discussion

1. Do you use the sounds m, n, ng, and l in this way in your L1? Why? / Why not?

Practice

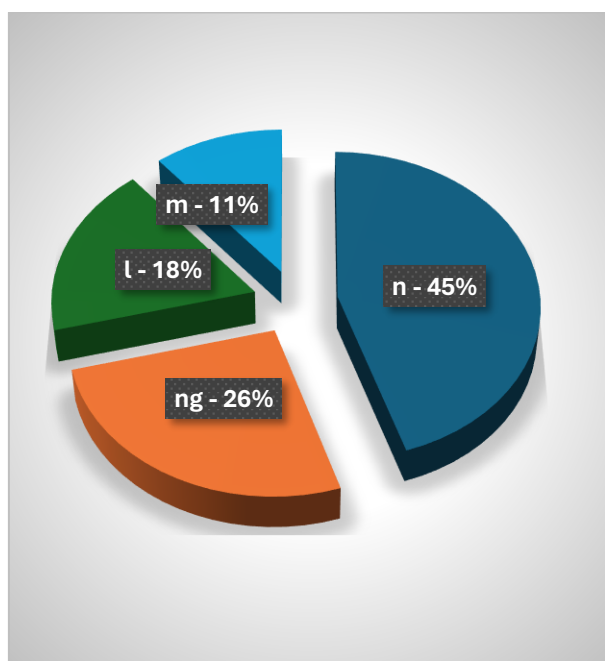
1. Practice the phrases with friendly consonant sounds on p.60.
2. Practice the phrases on p.60, as they change from bad CV connections into good VC connections.
3. Practice the phrases with ng on p.60, then write ten more phrases with a syllable ending in ng meeting a word – starting with either a vowel or consonant sound. For example: 'sing a song with love'. Practice saying them out loud.
4. Write a word ending in m, then a word starting with a consonant sound, e.g., 'home time'. Practice saying this friendly connection. Try writing more examples and say them out loud.
5. Write a word ending in n, then a word starting with a consonant sound, e.g., 'one day'. Practice saying this friendly connection. Try writing more examples and say them out loud.
6. Write a word ending in ng, then a word starting with a consonant sound, e.g., 'bring me'. Practice saying this friendly connection. Try writing more examples and say them out loud.
7. Write a word ending in l, then a word starting with a consonant sound, e.g., 'will you'. Practice saying this friendly connection. Try writing more examples and say them out loud.
8. In each case above, notice where your tongue is and how – after saying the friendly consonant sound – your mouth and tongue are ready to pronounce the next consonant sound.
9. Practice trying to move forward friendly consonant sounds in CC connections on p.61. Notice how difficult it is. That's why we don't do it!

Further Study

- [Friendly Consonant Sounds](#)

Unit 3.2 Breakdown of friendly consonant sounds

According to research, the breakdown of friendly consonant sound use in English is as follows:



We can see that **n** is the most common friendly consonant sound, at 45%, followed by **ng** (26%), **l** (18%), and finally **m** (11%).

Note: when 'n' meets 'k' or hard 'c' in English spelling the sound produced is **ng** + k, not n + k. For example:

think = thin**gk**, thank = than**gk**, uncle = un**gk**le, and so on

n is the easiest consonant sound to pronounce next to another consonant sound. This could be why native speakers often naturally change **ng** to **n** at the end of a gerund or ing form, e.g.,

I'm goin' out instead of: I'm going out

Although very common, this is not considered Standard English.

For a syllable with a friendly consonant sound at the end, the **syllable shape** can be V-C or C-C, but not C-V or V-V, because they do not end with a consonant sound. For example:

| | |
|-----|---------------------|
| V-C | I'm, own, owl, ing |
| C-C | jam, win, pal, sing |

In practice it is far more likely for an English syllable to begin with a consonant sound than a vowel sound, making a C-C syllable shape the most common for syllables ending with a friendly consonant sound.

As with all sound connections, we are focusing on the **sounds**, not the **spelling** of the words:

| | |
|-------|---|
| climb | the spelling ends with the letter 'b', but the sound is m |
| one | the spelling ends with the letter 'e', but the sound is n |
| whale | the spelling ends with the letter 'e', but the sound is l |
| Singh | the spelling ends with the letter 'h', but the sound is ng |

Quiz

#1. At 45%, _____ is the friendly consonant sound that occurs the most frequently.

- a) ng
- b) m
- c) l
- d) n

#2. _____ is the next most frequent friendly consonant sound, at 26%, followed by _____ (18%) and _____ (11%).

- a) ng, l, m
- b) l, m, ng
- c) ng, m, l
- d) m, l, ng

#3. When 'n' meets 'k' in English spelling the sound produced is _____ + k. For example: pink.

- a) n
- b) ng
- c) k
- d) nk

#4. An English syllable is far more likely to begin with a _____ sound than a _____ sound.

- a) vowel, consonant
- b) vowel, friendly consonant
- c) consonant, good
- d) consonant, vowel

#5. Which word does not end with a friendly consonant sound?

- a) sale
- b) bone
- c) gate
- d) comb

Practice

1. Look at the words with ng + k on p.63. Write down ten more examples of words with the spelling 'nk' which sounds like ng + k, e.g., 'pink'. Make up phrases with them – both CV connections ('pink elephant' = ping kelephant) and CC connections ('pink dress' = ping kdress). Practice saying them out loud, resting on the ng sound.
2. Write ten words with a V-C syllable shape ending in a friendly consonant sound, e.g., 'own'. Make a natural phrase with each one meeting a consonant sound, e.g., 'own goal'. Practice these friendly connections. Notice that they are as easy to pronounce as VC connections.
3. Write ten words with a C-C syllable shape ending in a friendly consonant sound, e.g., 'jam'. Make a natural phrase with each one meeting a consonant sound, e.g., 'jam tart'. Practice

these friendly connections. Again, notice that they are as easy to pronounce as VC connections

4. Say the words 'climb', 'one', 'whale', and 'Singh' on p.63 out loud. Find more words that fit each pattern, e.g., 'thumb', 'done', 'hole', and so on, then make a phrase with each one meeting a consonant sound. Practice these friendly connections.

Unit 3.3 Where do we find friendly consonant sounds?

There are many **common words** in English that end with the four friendly consonant sounds m, n, ng, and l, including 19 of the 100 most frequently occurring words in written English¹.

Read the list of **high-frequency words** that end with friendly consonant sounds out loud. Notice that n is the most common sound, followed by m, then l. ng mainly occurs in gerunds and ing form verbs:

| n (rank out of 100) | m (rank out of 100) | l (rank out of 100) |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| in (7) | from (25) | will / 'll (33) |
| on (14) | time (55) | all (36) |
| an (32) | him (58) | well (89) |
| one (35) | some (66) | |
| when (51) | them (68) | |
| can (53) | come (76) | |
| person (61) | | |
| than (71) | | |
| then (72) | | |
| even (91) | | |

Very often when we **delete** a consonant sound at the end of a syllable, we meet a friendly consonant sound, which means we can rest on it and the connection is good. For example:

| | |
|------|--|
| and | we usually delete the d of 'and' in a phrase, e.g., 'fish an' chips' |
| want | we delete the t in a CC connection and add a glottal stop : 'When do you wan' to go?' |
| went | we delete the t in a CC connection and add a glottal stop: 'We wen' to the shop.' |

Practice reading out loud this list of common **numbers** that end with friendly consonant sounds. Read a few of them together and notice the easy connections:

Twelve of the first twenty numbers in English end with n:

one, seven, nine, ten, eleven, all -teen numbers (13-19), twenty (twen + ty)
seventy (seven + ty), ninety (nine + ty), hundred (hun + dred), million, billion

Common **suffixes** ending with m, n, ng, and l. Notice how n dominates again:

-com, -dom, -im, -ism, -ium, -some, -um
-ain, -an, -ane, -cian, -ean, -eign, -en, -enne, -gon, -ian, -in, -ine,
-ion, -on, -oon, -phone, -ren, -sion, -son, -tain, -teen, -thon, -tion

¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Most_common_words_in_English

-ing (which often changes to -in')

-al, -eal, -el, -ial, -le, -ol, -ple, -tal, -ual, -ule

There are also many suffixes where, when you delete the **t** in a CC connection, you get the friendly consonant sound **n**, for example:

-ant, -ent, -iant, -ient, -ment, etc.

Below there are some examples of CC connections with words ending in these suffixes. In each case **t** is deleted and replaced with a glottal stop:

| | | |
|--------------------------|----|------------------|
| vac ant flat | >> | vacan_ flat |
| inst ant noodles | >> | instan_ noodles |
| rec ent study | >> | recen_ study |
| par ent who | >> | paren_ who |
| brill iant day | >> | brillian_ day |
| val iant knight | >> | valian_ knight |
| clie nt focused | >> | clien_ focused |
| ancie nt language | >> | ancien_ language |

Here are a few common **prefixes** ending in **m**, **n**, and **l**:

com-, im-

an-, con-, down-, en-, in-, non-, un-

il-, ill-, mal-

Prefixes ending in **ng** are much more difficult to find, but here are a few from medical English:

| | |
|----------|---|
| laryng- | <i>connected with the larynx, e.g. 'laryngectomy'</i> |
| myring- | <i>connected with the eardrum, e.g. 'myringitis'</i> |
| salping- | <i>connected with fallopian tubes, e.g. 'salpingectomy'</i> |

If we extend the list of the most common words in written English to the top 1,000, there are many very common **content words** that also end with the sounds **m**, **n**, **ng**, and **l**. Most of them are one-syllable words too, for example: 'time', 'seen', 'thing', 'call', and so on.

Quiz

#1. True or false: more high-frequency words end in **m** than the other friendly consonant sounds.

- a) True.
- b) False.

#2. When we delete a consonant sound, e.g., **d** and **t**, we often get a _____ sound, e.g., 'and', 'want', and 'went'.

- a) VC
- b) friendly consonant
- c) consonant
- d) vowel

#3. We usually _____ the d of 'and' in a phrase, e.g., 'fish an' chips.'

- a) move forward
- b) add
- c) change
- d) delete

#4. _____ of the first twenty numbers in English end with n.

- a) Ten
- b) Eleven
- c) Twelve
- d) Twenty

#5. Many common _____ end with friendly consonant sounds, which helps us to make _____ connections.

- a) prefixes, VC
- b) suffixes, good
- c) suffixes, CC
- d) words, CV

Discussion

1. Do you find friendly connections in English easy to pronounce? Why? / Why not?
2. Do you find friendly connections easier to pronounce than VC connections – or vice versa? Why? / Why not?

Practice

1. In each exercise below, when saying friendly connections out loud, notice how easy they are to pronounce compared to bad sound connections: CV, CC, and VV.
2. Read the list of high-frequency words on p.66 out loud. Make up short phrases by adding following words that start with a consonant sound, e.g., 'in the hall' and 'on time'. Say them out loud.
3. Make a note of the syllable shape of each high-frequency word, e.g., 'in' is V-C and 'from' is C-C. Learn which words will cause bad connections due to their shape. Hint: any words which do not have a C-V shape, like 'go'.
4. Practice saying the phrases with 'and', 'want', and 'went' on p.66. Think of five more phrases with '____ and ____', like 'fish and chips'. We always delete the d in 'and' in CC connections, because it is in a blend. (See [Lesson 6](#).)
5. Practice reading the numbers on p.66 out loud. Make up short phrases by adding following words that start with a consonant sound, e.g., 'one day' and 'ten people'. Say them out loud.
6. Choose a few of the suffixes on pp.66-67. Write down five words with each suffix and make up short phrases by adding following words that start with a consonant sound, e.g., 'the intercom works'. Say them out loud.
7. Learn the list of suffixes on pp.66-67, in relation to friendly consonant sounds. Note how many there are and how helpful this is for us as we use connected speech. Note that 'ing', which is common in English as the continuous verb form and in gerunds, ends with the friendly consonant sound ng.

8. Look at the suffixes with '-nt' on p.67. Make up phrases with words ending in these suffixes meeting consonant sounds, e.g., 'vibrant colour' = vibran_ colour. Practice saying them, deleting the t, adding a glottal stop, and resting on the n.
9. Choose a few of the prefixes on p.67. Create words by adding following syllables that start with a consonant sound, e.g., 'com-petition'. Say them out loud.
10. Write down twenty common content words that end with a friendly consonant sound, e.g. 'mine'.

Further Study

- [Suffixes](#)
- [Prefixes](#)

Unit 3.4 Practice with words ending with friendly consonant sounds

While saying the following words out loud, notice that they are as easy to pronounce as VC connections.

Compare them with the phrases in [Lesson 2](#).

1. Practice saying the following common words ending in friendly consonant sound **m** in CC connections:

dam ham jam lamb mam Pam Sam
dim him Jim Kim limb rim sim Tim
beam deem meme ream seem team
dumb gum hum mum numb sum yum

2. Practice saying the following common words ending in friendly consonant sound **n** in CC connections:

ban can fan Jan man nan pan ran tan
Ben den fen hen Ken men pen ten when
bin din fin gin kin Lynn pin tin win
been dean keen lean mean seen wean

3. Practice saying the following common words ending in friendly consonant sound **ng** in CC connections:

bang fang gang hang pang rang sang tang
dung hung lung rung sung tongue young
bong gong long pong wrong strong song
Bing ding king ping ring sing thing wing

4. Practice saying the following common words ending in friendly consonant sound **l** in CC connections:

ball call fall gall hall maul pall tall wall
bell cell dell fell gel Nell sell tell well yell
bill dill fill Jill mill nil pill Rhyll till will
bail fail gale hale mail nail pail sale tale

Quiz

#1. True or false: friendly connections are just as easy to pronounce as VC connections.

- a) True.
- b) False.

#2. Which word sounds the most different to the others?

- a) dumb
- b) gum
- c) hum
- d) mum
- e) numb
- f) son

#3. Which word sounds the most different to the others?

- a) been
- b) dean
- c) keen
- d) lean
- e) meme
- f) seen

#4. Which word sounds the most different to the others?

- a) ding
- b) think
- c) king
- d) ring
- e) sing
- f) wing

#5. Which word sounds the most different to the others?

- a) fail
- b) gale
- c) hale
- d) mail
- e) same
- f) whale

Practice

1. Read the word lists on p.70 out loud.
2. P.70 can be used for reference. It lists common one-syllable words ending in each friendly consonant sound. You may use them to create phrases and sentences with friendly connections. For example, with m: 'the dam broke', 'ham sandwich', and 'do you like jam with peanut butter?' Practice saying them out loud.
3. Can you add any more one-syllable words to each list? Practice saying them out loud.
4. Try to build sentences which contain two, three, or four friendly connections, with different friendly consonant sounds, e.g., 'Jan will take a young man's ham sandwich.' Say them out loud.

Unit 3.5 Practice phrases with VC and friendly connections

Practice the following example phrases which have only **friendly** and **VC connections**. Notice how easy they are to pronounce compared to phrases with only bad connections.

*Note: it is rare to find a phrase or sentence with **only** friendly connections. Friendly connections can be found in most sentences mixing with other connections, both good and bad.*

a) with **m**

from Hea throw, time does, mum lives, mu seum with
im por tant, from Marks, im pre ssion, team reached
some wild, storm was

b) with **n**:

se ven twen ty, Co pen ha gen, train to, in Ber gen
can celled, pa ssen gers, on ho li day, E din burgh
di sa ppoin ted, in this

c) with **ng**:

CC connections:

dri ving to, cro ssing the, play ing with Fran(g) kie bought (ng + k)

CV connections:

mo ving in, si tting on, we dding and, loo king at, ge tting a

d) with **l**:

will be, cy cle to, we'll need, chil dren, whole fa mi ly
she'll give, Mi chael was, we'll have, you'll make
u sual to, all year, gol den

e) mixed:

un(g) cle vi si ted (ng + k), co mman ding o ffi cer, sho pping cen tre
small fa shion bou tique, Don(g) ca ster (ng + k) Fal cons
time loo king at, cli mbing in the moun tains, won der ful way
been pre di cting sleet, will be di sa ppoin ted
lea ving them to day, win dow sho pping in the

Quiz

#1. It is _____ to find a phrase or sentence which has only friendly connections.

- a) rare
- b) common

#2. Break this word into three syllables, with one VC connection and one friendly connection: passengers.

- a) pass en gers
- b) pa ssen gers
- c) pass eng ers
- d) pa sseng ers

#3. Break this phrase into four syllables, with one VC connection and two friendly connections: seven-twenty.

- a) seven twen ty
- b) se ven twenty
- c) sev en twen ty
- d) se ven twen ty

#4. Break this phrase into five syllables, with two VC connections and two friendly connections: small fashion boutique.

- a) small fa shion bout ique
- b) small fa shio nbou tique
- c) small fa shion bou tique
- d) small fash ion bou tique

#5. Break this phrase into six syllables, with three VC connections and two friendly connections: will be disappointed.

- a) will bed i sa ppoin ted
- b) will be di sapp oin ted
- c) will be di sa ppoi nted
- d) will be di sa ppoin ted

Practice

1. Practice the phrases with VC and friendly connections on p.72. How easy do they feel to you?
2. Write your own phrases with only VC and friendly connections. Practice saying them aloud. This is how we would like all English speech to sound.
3. Copy sentences from a real text, e.g., a book or a web page, and break the words up into syllables. Find phrases with friendly connections and repeat them out loud. What is the longest chain of syllables with friendly connections you can find?

Lesson 4:

Moving Forward – Part 1

Unit 4.1 Why move forward?

Sound connections with **VC** or **friendly connections** are easy to pronounce. They make up around 60% of our speech.

Because the remaining 40% of sound connections are difficult to pronounce, we have to change them into **VC** or **friendly connections**.

We do this using the following actions:

- **Moving forward** a consonant sound
- **Deleting** a consonant sound
- **Adding** a consonant sound

The first action is to **move forward** a consonant sound from the end of a syllable to the beginning of the next syllable. This is the most common action in connected speech. Moving forward fixes about 60% of **bad** connections.

Note: moving forward is not an option in VV (vowel to vowel) connections. Instead, we add a consonant sound – see [Lesson 7](#).

Remember that **moving forward** removes the consonant sound from the preceding vowel sound, giving it room to breathe:

look **at** >> loo **kat**
cv vc

Instead of 'look at', with the focus on **k**, the emphasis remains a little longer on the vowel sound **oo**.

In CV and CC connections, we move forward the **first** consonant sound to make the connection VC.

In this CV connection, **v** moves forward:

a rrive **at** >> a rri **vat**
vc cv vc vc

In this CC connection, **s** moves forward:

this **man** >> thi **sman**
cc vc

If the connection remains **bad**, we perform another action, for example:

Jack's **friend** z moves forward and changes to s >> Jack **sfriend**
cc cc

But a bad CC connection remains, so we move forward again:

Jack **sfriend** >> Ja **cksfriend**
cc vc

Both **z** and **k** must move forward to get the desired VC connection.

As you can see, it is much easier for us to pronounce one or more consonant sound at the **beginning** of a syllable than at the **end**.

However, moving forward more than once does not happen very often. (See [Lesson 8](#).)

Quiz

- #1. Moving forward is the most _____ action in connected speech.
- a) sensible
 - b) common
 - c) serious
 - d) amazing
- #2. Moving forward a consonant sound removes it from the previous vowel sound which _____.
- a) makes that vowel sound easier
 - b) makes that consonant sound clearer
 - c) makes that vowel sound weaker
 - d) makes that vowel sound clearer
- #3. In CV and CC connections, we move forward the consonant sound _____.
- a) to make a bad connection
 - b) to make a VC connection
 - c) to make a friendly connection
 - d) to make a VC or friendly connection
- #4. If the connection is still bad, we _____.
- a) leave it
 - b) take action again
 - c) add a VC connection
 - d) use a friendly consonant sound
- #5. It is far easier for us to pronounce one or more consonant sound at the _____ of a _____.
- a) beginning, word
 - b) end, syllable
 - c) beginning, syllable
 - d) beginning, sentence

Discussion

1. How do you feel about moving forward consonant sounds in English? How easy is it for you? Moving forward accounts for about 60% of our actions in connected speech, so it is something we have to get used to doing.

Practice

1. Write down five two-word phrases with VC connections and five with friendly connections. Practice saying them out loud.
2. Find examples of five two-word phrases with VC connections and five with friendly connections in a real text. Practice saying them out loud.
3. Practice the phrase 'look at' on p.75. Which version feels easier to you? What is the difference when we move forward the k sound?
4. Practice the phrases 'arrive at' and 'this man' on p.75. In each case, which version feels easier to you? What is the difference when we move forward the first consonant sound?

5. Practice the three stages of the phrase 'Jack's friend' on p.75: Jack's friend >> Jack sfriend >> Ja cksfriend. Try jumping straight to stage 3 in a sentence, e.g., 'I know Ja cksfriend'.
6. Listen to a podcast or other English programme with native speakers. Slow down the play speed and try to hear when the speakers move forward consonant sounds. Write down a few phrases which demonstrate moving forward and practice saying them out loud.

Further Study

- [Lesson 8 – Multiple Actions](#)

Unit 4.2 The 8 voiced and unvoiced consonant pairs

Of the 48 individual phonemes (sounds) in English, there are 25 consonant sounds – **15 voiced** and **10 unvoiced**.

A consonant sound is **voiced** when the **vocal cords** in your **voice box (larynx)** vibrate while making it; a consonant sound is **unvoiced** when the vocal cords are still while making it. There is no sound, apart from the sound of air moving through the mouth, tongue, lips, and teeth.

There are **8 pairs of consonant sounds**, where one is voiced and the other is unvoiced. It could be said that these consonant sounds are in fact **the same sound**, just with a voiced and an unvoiced version.

The 8 pairs of sounds are, in order of frequency when **moving forward**:

| Voiced consonant sound: | Unvoiced consonant sound: |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| z – zip | s – sun |
| d – dog | t – to |
| g – go | k – kit |
| v – van | f – fan |
| j – jam | ch – cheese |
| b – bag | p – put |
| th – this | tt – thick |
| zz – meas ure | sh – sh op |

In CV connections – voiced and unvoiced consonants do not change moving forward:

voiced consonant moves forward **without changing** to unvoiced:

big **egg** >> bi **gegg**

unvoiced consonant moves forward as it is – it cannot change:

duck **egg** >> du **keg**

In CC connections:

voiced consonant moves forward and changes to unvoiced:

big day >> bi kday

unvoiced consonant moves forward as it is – it cannot change:

duck man >> du kman

Using a voiced consonant sound would draw attention to the bad connection and make the consonant sound more of the focus than the vowel sound, which – if the vowel sound is stressed – messes up the sound spine.

Using an unvoiced consonant sound makes the connection less obvious and helps to highlight the stressed vowel sound in the sound spine. It means the stressed vowel sound is heard more clearly than if a voiced consonant sound was pronounced after it.

For example:

big day >> bi kday

The k sound is soft and barely heard, which makes the i sound more obvious, whereas pronouncing the voiced g would draw attention to itself – and away from i. (See [Lesson 1](#).)

Quiz

#1. There are _____ voiced consonant sounds and _____ unvoiced consonant sounds.

- a) 10, 15
- b) 20, 5
- c) 15, 10
- d) 5, 10

#2. A consonant sound is voiced when your _____ vibrate while producing it, and unvoiced when they are _____ while producing it.

- a) vocal cords, vibrating
- b) vocal cord, still
- c) tongue, vibrating
- d) vocal cords, still

#3. Which of these are not consonant pairs? (Choose up to three.)

Select all that apply:

- a) z – s
- b) d – t
- c) g – l
- d) v – f
- e) j – ch
- f) b – d
- g) th – tt
- h) zz – s

#4. True or false: voiced consonant sounds change to unvoiced when they move forward in CC connections.

- a) True.
- b) False.

#5. Using a voiced consonant sound when moving forward in a CC connection _____.

- a) draws attention to the vowel sound, at the expense of the consonant sound.
- b) draws attention to the consonant sound, at the expense of the vowel sound.

Discussion

1. What did you know about the eight voiced and unvoiced consonant pairs in English before beginning this course?
2. If the answer is 'little' or 'nothing', why do you think this feature of English speech – so important for changing sounds in connected speech – is not more widely known?
3. How familiar are you with the 48 sounds of English?

Practice

1. Get familiar with the [48 sounds of English](#).
2. Practice saying the 8 voiced and unvoiced consonant pairs on p.78 out loud. What do you notice? Do you feel that they are connected – in fact the same sound – just with two different versions?
3. Practice saying the phrases on pp.78-79 ('big egg' to 'duck man') out loud. In CC connections, try to reduce the unvoiced consonant sounds as much as possible, to draw the attention away from them, and keep it on the preceding stressed vowel sound.
4. Write five more phrases with CC connections, e.g., 'bad news', and practice moving forward the first consonant sound, changing it to unvoiced, if necessary: 'ba tnews'. Make sure the t sound is very light – almost inaudible.
5. Find five examples of consonant sounds moving forward and changing to unvoiced in a real text, e.g., '...judge them' >> '...ju chthem'. Practice saying the phrases out loud.

Further Study

- [The 48 Sounds of English](#)
- [The 8 Voiced and Unvoiced Consonant Pairs](#)

Unit 4.3 Frequency of consonant sounds moving forward

7 out of 25 consonant sounds do not move forward, for various reasons:

| | |
|--------------|---|
| r w y | are never pronounced at the end of a syllable. We use them for linking in VV connections (Lesson 7) |
| h | is never pronounced at the end of a syllable |
| hh | is not in general use in Standard English |
| zz | never appears at the end of a syllable in English |
| ng | never moves forward, as we learned in Lesson 3 |

In addition, **t** does not move forward in CC connections; it is deleted and usually replaced by a **glottal stop**.

Order of frequency of consonant sounds that move forward:

*A reminder that, when discussing sound connections, we are focused on the **sounds**, rather than the **spelling** of words. Below you can see the various ways each sound may be spelled.*

Table – Part 1:

| Frequency (%) | Sound: (voiced) | Examples of Spellings: | In CC connections, the sound changes to: |
|---------------|-----------------|--|--|
| 31% | z | hits, blouse, he's, showbiz, buzz | s |
| 10% | d | head, made, could, add, she'd | t |
| 10% | t | hot, mate, baked, might, watt, doubt | - |
| 10% | v | have, I've, improv, of | f |
| 8% | k | back, ink, make, mic, tech, plaque | - |
| 8% | s | this, horse, boss, sauce, relax | - |
| 7% | n | an, lane, inn, tonne, sign | (not in a pair) |
| 5% | f | if, life, off, photograph, tough, half | - |

Order of frequency of consonant sounds that move forward:

Table – Part 2:

| Frequency (%) | Sound: (voiced) | Examples of Spellings: | In CC connections, the sound changes to: |
|---------------|-----------------|--|--|
| 3% | p | up, hope, app | - |
| 3% | ch | beach, watch | - |
| 2% | j | large, hedge | ch |
| 2% | th | with, bathe | tt |
| 1% | m | platform, programme, comb, palm, hymn, hmm | (not in a pair) |
| 1% | g | big, egg, catalogue | k |
| 1% | b | job, robe, ebb | p |
| 1% | tt | mouth | - |
| 1% | sh | fish | - |
| 1% | l | musical, will, whistle, Elle | (not in a pair) |
| 0% | zz | (does not appear) | sh |

One of the aims of this course is to enable you to learn, just by looking at the sounds that meet between syllables, what action to take in terms of connected speech. As you become more familiar with and skilled in using connected speech, you will be able to do this while you are speaking too.

For example, you see a VC connection like 'a book' and you know to take no action; you see a CV connection like 'take on' and you know to move forward the k, and so on.

Apart from the 7 sounds mentioned above, and friendly consonant sounds m, n, and l, all English consonant sounds can move forward – in both CV and CC connections. (Remember, friendly consonant sounds m, n, and l only move forward in CV connections, remaining in CC connections.)

So, when you see any of the above sounds at the end of the first syllable in a pair, you can be confident of moving forward.

Don't think twice about it – just move it forward!

If you are looking at a sound connection, and you see one of the spellings above, you can be sure that the sound moves forward – whether the connection is CV or CC. (CV only for friendly consonant sounds m, n, and l.) If the sound is voiced (in red), you need to change it to unvoiced in CC connections.

In this lesson we will focus on the four most common pairs of consonant sounds that move forward, according to our research:

z (31%) / s (8%)
d (10%) / t (10%)
g (1%) / k (8%)
v (10%) / f (5%)

In [Lesson 5](#), we will explore the remaining consonant sounds.

Quiz

#1. There are 7 out of 25 consonant sounds that do not move forward. They are:

- a) h, hh, g, r, w, y, zz
- b) h, hh, ng, r, v, y, zz
- c) h, h, ng, r, w, y, zz
- d) h, hh, ng, r, w, y, zz

#2. Apart from these seven sounds, all English consonant sounds can move forward _____.

- a) in CV connections
- b) in CC connections
- c) in a few sound connections
- d) in both CV and CC connections

#3. The four most common pairs of consonant sounds that move forward are:

- a) z – s, d – t, y – k, v – f
- b) z – sh, d – t, g – k, v – f
- c) z – s, d – t, g – l, v – f
- d) z – s, d – t, g – k, v – f

#4. This course will help you to learn, just by looking at _____ connections, what to do to make a _____ connection.

- a) syllable, CV
- b) syllable, good
- c) friendly, good
- d) syllable, bad

#5. For example, you see a CV connection like 'made of' and you know to _____ the d sound: 'ma dof'.

- a) delete
- b) add
- c) move forward
- d) change

Discussion

1. Research online and discuss: why does English spelling give us a variety of spelling patterns for the same sounds? Does your L1 do the same? If yes, why?
2. Before it is discussed in the next unit, speculate as to why z is – overwhelmingly – the most common sound to appear at the end of a syllable in English.

Practice

1. Say the groups of words (Examples of Spellings) on pp.81-82 out loud. Notice the different ways of spelling the same sounds.
2. Choose a sound, e.g., v, and write two-word phrases with words in the group by adding words which start with either a vowel or consonant sound, e.g., 'have a cake' (CV) = HA VA CAKE and 'have lunch' (CC) = HA FLUNCH. Practice saying them out loud.

3. Write two-word phrases for each of the four sound pairs to show how the voiced consonant sound changes to unvoiced in CC connections, e.g., 'buzz which' = BU SWHICH.

Further Study

- [5 Rules for Predicting Sounds from Spelling in English](#)
- [Spelling Rules](#)
- [Hard Words – FREE Online Course](#)

Unit 4.4 z / s

1. z (31%) / s (8%)

The most common consonant sound that moves forward is z, almost always written as 's', which then changes to s in a CC connection.

z

There are many reasons why z is the most common sound to move forward. Remember, the spelling is usually 's', but the sound is z:

The reasons are, in order of frequency:

- **common function words** that end in the letter 's', e.g., was, as, these, his, because:
was a as we these are his name because it
- **plural words**, e.g., parents, shoes, passports, friends, books:
parents are shoes that passports in friends with books at
- **contractions with 'is'**, e.g., brother's, Emma's, it's, he's, music's:
brother's old Emma's gone it's amazing he's late music's on
- **possessive 's'**, e.g., Jenna's, Sam's, doctor's, Marie's, women's:
Jenna's art Sam's time doctor's ink Marie's dress women's issues
- **s form in present simple**, e.g., lives, wears, plays, walks, pays:
lives in wears jeans plays a walks to pays in
- **common content words**, e.g., use, please, always, and names like, Falcons, Jules:
use a please the always input Falcons which Jules and
- **contractions with 'has'** (present perfect), e.g., she's, it's, he's, family's, Joanne's:
she's enjoyed it's been he's updated family's met Joanne's owed

Of course, in addition to words ending with the letter 's' which have the sound z, there is a much smaller group of English words which end with the letter 'z', which is always pronounced as z. For example:

jazz, buzz, fizz, quiz, waltz, quartz, showbiz, schmaltz, razzmatazz

s

Common words ending with the letter 's' which is pronounced as the sound s:

function words: this

content words: thinks, horse, audience, since, relax, ice, service, once, twice, dress

Practice: **z** / changes to **s** in CC connections

(CV) was eating brother's egg does it goes OK she's even

(CC) because they plays with girls get he's found was good

Quiz

#1. The sound *z* is almost always written as the letter _____.

- a) *z*
- b) *s*
- c) *f*
- d) *zz*

#2. The voiced consonant sound *z* changes to the unvoiced consonant sound _____ in CC connections.

- a) *z*
- b) *c*
- c) *f*
- d) *s*

#3. Why is *z* the most common consonant sound at the end of a syllable? Choose three INCORRECT reasons:

Select all that apply:

- a) plural '*s*'
- b) many words end with the letter '*z*'
- c) contractions with '*is*'
- d) contractions with '*has*'
- e) possessive '*s*'
- f) contractions with '*had*'
- g) *s* form in present simple
- h) regular verbs

#4. Which word ends with the unvoiced consonant sound *s*?

- a) *was*
- b) *horse*
- c) *his*
- d) *jazz*

#5. In which sound connection does the voiced consonant sound *z* move forward and change to the unvoiced *s*?

- a) *goes up*
- b) *goes on*
- c) *goes well*
- d) *goes OK*

Discussion

1. Have you ever considered that the letter '*s*' at the end of many English words is usually pronounced *z*?

Practice

1. Practice reading the seven sets of example phrases on p.85 out loud.
2. Look at the categories in red on p.85. Write down five more two-word phrases in each category and practice saying them out loud. Differentiate between CV connections – *z* remains – and CC connections – *z* changes to *s*.

3. Read the words ending with 'z' on p.85 out loud. Write down ten more common English words that end with the letter 'z'. Why do you think there are not as many as words ending in the letter 's'?
4. Look at the list of 'common words ending with the letter 's'...' on p.85. Try to find more everyday English words like this.
5. Practice the phrases at the bottom of p.85. Differentiate between CV connections
– z remains – and CC connections – z changes to s.

Unit 4.5 d / t

2. d (10%) / t (10%)

The sound **d** often appears at the end of a syllable due to common words like 'and', the high frequency of **regular verbs** with '-ed' endings, and common function words, like **modal verbs** could, would, should, and **past perfect/continuous** endings with 'had', e.g., he'd, she'd, we'd, they'd, etc.

When **d** moves forward in a **CV connection**, it joins the next sound as **d**. In a **CC connection**, we usually move it forward as a very light **t**, e.g., 'made some' becomes 'ma t some'.

The exception is when the next sound is **t**, in which case we delete the **d** without adding a glottal stop, e.g., 'head teacher' > 'hea teacher'.

This is because, as it moves forward in a **CC connection**, **d** changes into **t**, creating a **duplicate pair**.

We also delete **d** when it is part of a consonant blend, e.g., 'seemed to' > 'seem to'. See [Lesson 6](#).

The first sound in a duplicate pair is always deleted.

For example: 'had to' becomes 'ha to' and 'need the' becomes 'nee the'.

There is no need to add a glottal stop, but you must say the phrases quickly, without drawing attention to the deleted **d**. Don't linger over them – and don't leave a gap!

Because the word 'and' has **d** in a blend ('-nd'), we delete the **d** in a **CC connection**. For example:

'fish and chips' becomes 'fish 'n' chips'

'his and hers' becomes 'his 'n' hers'

'fruit and veg' becomes 'fruit 'n' veg'

t only moves forward in **CV connections**. In **CC connections** it is always **deleted** and usually replaced by a **glottal stop**. **t** is very common at the end of a syllable due to high frequency words like:

function words: that, it, not, at, but, what, out, about, (a) lot, (a) bit, etc.

content words: get, got, just, first, want, most, quite, great, eat, last, bought, test, quiet, etc.

Practice: **d** / changes to **t** in **CC connections**

(CV) had a would it wanted a you'd ask had I

(CC) made some bid for had found I'd gone we'd get

Quiz

#1. The sound **d** is common at the end of a syllable because of _____. Choose up to three **INCORRECT** answers:

Select all that apply:

- a) high-frequency words like 'and'
- b) '-ed' endings of regular verbs
- c) future perfect endings
- d) common function words like 'could'
- e) common adjectives

(continued)

- f) past perfect endings with 'had'
- g) common function words like 'that'

#2. In a CV connection, d moves forward as _____, while in a CC connection it changes to _____.

- a) t, t
- b) d, t
- c) d, d
- d) t, d

#3. When d meets t as it moves forward in a CC connection, we _____ the d, e.g., 'good to' becomes 'goo to'.

- a) move forward
- b) add
- c) change
- d) delete

#4. Which phrase is correct in spoken English?

- a) fish 'n' chip
- b) fish 'n' chips
- c) fish and chips
- d) fish with chips

#5. In which sound connection does the voiced consonant sound d move forward and change to the unvoiced t?

- a) had gone
- b) had eaten
- c) had asked
- d) had opened

Discussion

1. Did you know that the consonant sounds d and t are the most difficult sounds for native speakers of English to pronounce in fast speech? That is why we always delete t in CC connections, and often delete d too.
2. Which sounds do *you* find difficult to pronounce in English? Which sounds are the most difficult for native speakers to pronounce in your L1?

Practice

1. Practice saying the phrases 'made some' and 'head teacher' on p.88 out loud.
2. Practice the three phrases with 'and' on p.88 out loud. Note that 'and' becomes simply a schwa sound followed by n. Write and practice saying out loud five more phrases where 'and' is similarly reduced.
3. Find a short real text and count how many times the t sound is present at the end of words. Count the words in the text and work out the percentage of words with t at the end. (For example, in the previous sentence that number is 4 times out of 17 words, giving us a percentage of 24% – almost a quarter. 3 out of 4 – 'count the', 'out the', and 'at the' – will be deleted due to CC connections.)

4. Write short phrases with function and content words ending in t – for example, the words on p.88 (or the handout below). Practice saying them out loud. See how long the phrases can get with CC connections and t at the end of each syllable. Add glottal stops when necessary. For example, 'that quiet fat cat just sat...' (Six consecutive words ending in t.) Practice saying them out loud – deleting t at the end of each syllable and adding glottal stops where needed.
5. Practice the phrases at the bottom of p.88. Differentiate between CV connections – d remains – and CC connections – d changes to t.

Further Study

- [200 One-Syllable Words that End with 't'](#)
- [Lesson 6 – Deleting Sounds](#)

Unit 4.6 g / k

3. g (1%) / k (8%)

The **voiced** version of the sound g is much less frequent than its **unvoiced** partner k, because it is rare for the sound g to end a word. However, g *can* be found at the end of some common words, e.g.:

bag, big, blog, bug, clog, crag, dig, dog, egg, fig

fog, jog, leg, log, mug, pig, plug, slug, tag, wig

In contrast, k appears at the end of plenty of high-frequency words, for example:

function words: back

content words: make, like, take, think, work, talk, week, ask, look, walk, music, black, etc.

phrasal verbs: make up, take out, take on, take back, pick up, back up, break in, break down, check in, look out, think over, wake up, work out, etc.

Practice: **g** / changes to **k** in CC connections

(CV) mug of jog around dig into log onto nag every

(CC) egg box drug store big one bag with flag down

Practice: phrasal verbs ending in **k**:

(CV) make up walk on take off think up pick up
take on back out look around wake up make over

(CC) take back work towards break down make for take down
look down hark back to flick through blink back walk through

Quiz

#1. True or false: the voiced consonant sound g ends a syllable more often than its unvoiced partner k.

- a) True.
- b) False.

#2. k appears at the end of many common _____, such as: work, talk, ask, and look.

- a) function words
- b) content words
- c) words
- d) adverbs

#3. k creates CV connections in many common _____, e.g., 'make up', 'take out', and 'think over'.

- a) verbs
- b) idioms
- c) phrases
- d) phrasal verbs

#4. Which word ends with the voiced consonant sound g?

- a) check
- b) eggs
- c) egg
- d) edge

#5. In which sound connections does the voiced consonant sound g move forward as g?
(Choose two.)

Select all that apply:

- a) mug of
- b) mug that
- c) mug is
- d) mug which

Discussion

1. Have you ever associated g and k together in English? If not, why not? Can you accept them as being two versions of the same sound?
2. How do you feel about letters that change their sounds, i.e., they are not pronounced as they look and you have to remember to say them differently – e.g., g becomes k in a CC connection. Does your L1 have this feature?

Practice

1. Read the words ending in g on p.91 out loud. Make up new CC phrases with these words followed by words beginning with a consonant sound, e.g., 'bag was'. Say them out loud and practice moving forward the g and changing it to a very light k.
2. Make up phrases with the function and content words on p.91 that end in k – both CV and CC connections – and practice them out loud. Pay particular attention to when the k moves forward to meet another consonant sound, e.g., 'work with'. Make the k light – almost non-existent.
3. Read the phrasal verbs on p.91 out loud. Focus on making the CV and CC connections as unobtrusive as possible. Notice that in CV connections we can make up 'nonsense' phrases when we use connected speech, e.g., 'make up' = MAY CUP, and 'think up' = THINK CUP. But that is how we speak!
4. Practice the phrases with g on p.91. Differentiate between CV connections – g remains – and CC connections – g changes to k.

Further Study

- [Phrasal Verbs](#)

Unit 4.7 v / f

4. v (10%) / f (5%)

The word 'of' – pronounced ov – is the number 4 most frequent word in written English, meaning that we often have to move forward the v sound.

As a VC-shaped word ([Lesson 2](#)), 'of' frequently creates a bad connection in many sentences. Although it ends with the letter 'f', the sound is v.

Other problems with v are caused by contractions with main verb and auxiliary verb 'have', including present perfect sentences, i.e., I've, you've, we've, and they've. 'Have' is the 9th most common word in written English.

Common content words that end in v include:

give, love, five, drive, live, save, arrive, etc.

The f sound is less common at the end of a syllable than its voiced partner. We frequently hear it in the conjunction 'if' and the adverb/conjunction 'off', along with words ending in '-self', i.e., myself, yourself, herself, himself, self – and the number half.

Practice: v / changes to f in CC connections

(CV) we've all of it have a I've always save up

(CC) you've got they've said leave them five times of the

Quiz

#1. True or false: the letter 'f' in 'of' is pronounced with a voiced consonant sound: v.

- a) True.
- b) False.

#2. The word 'of' is unhelpful in connected speech because it is a _____ function word with a _____ shape.

- a) high-frequency, C-V
- b) high-frequency, V-C
- c) high-frequency, C-C
- d) short, V-C

#3. The _____ sound is less common at the end of a syllable than _____.

- a) v, f
- b) f, v

#4. The most common words that end in f include: (Choose up to three.)

Select all that apply:

- a) if
- b) scarf
- c) self
- d) half
- e) loaf

#5. In which sound connection does the voiced consonant sound *v* move forward and change to the unvoiced *f*?

- a) five of
- b) five and
- c) five times
- d) five or

Discussion

1. Are you aware that there are 'bad' words in English which raise red flags? I mean, words with bad syllable shapes that make it impossible to get a good connection on either side? (Unit 2.3.) 'Of' is one of these, because it is a V-C syllable shape. We cannot get a good VC connection on either side, so there will be two 'errors' to correct. For example, 'made of' = a CV connection, while 'of stone' = a CC connection, with *v* changing to *f* as it moves forward. 'Made of stone' has two bad connections and requires three actions – all caused by the word 'of'.

Practice

1. Write five phrases with 'of' + a word beginning with a vowel sound (CV). Practice saying them out loud, moving forward *v* and connecting it to the next vowel sound.
2. Write five phrases with 'of' + a word beginning with a consonant sound (CC). Practice saying them out loud, moving forward *v* and changing it to *f*.
3. As a word with a V-C syllable shape, 'of' is very much a red flag word in English. The red flag warns us that action will need to be taken to correct the errors caused by this word. Write down five more V-C shaped words and practice making CV and CC connections with them.
4. Read the contractions with 'have' on p.93. Write down five CC phrases with 'have' contractions, e.g., 'I've been', 'We've met', etc. Practice saying them out loud.
5. Make up CV and CC phrases with the words ending in *f* on p.93, e.g., 'myself and Lauren' (CV) and 'myself with Lauren' (CC). Practice saying them out loud. Notice that *f* moves forward in both connections without changing.
6. Practice the phrases with *v* on p.93. Differentiate between CV connections – *v* remains – and CC connections – *v* changes to *f*. Which are easier for you to pronounce? Why?

Further Study

- [Syllable shapes and red flags](#)

Lesson 5:

Moving Forward – Part 2

Unit 5.1 Introduction

In [Lesson 4](#) we looked at the **four most common pairs** of consonant sounds that move forward:

z (31%) / **s** (8%)
d (10%) / **t** (10%)
g (1%) / **k** (8%)
v (10%) / **f** (5%)

In this lesson we will focus on the **four less common pairs** of consonant sounds that move forward, according to our research:

j (2%) / **ch** (3%)
b (1%) / **p** (3%)
th (2%) / **tt** (1%)
zz (0%) / **sh** (1%)

It is clear from the figures above how much **less frequently** these eight sounds appear at the end of a syllable, compared to the first four pairs.

We might think that these sounds make very little impact in connected speech. However, it is still worth practicing them, because they do move forward.

We will also look at the remaining three consonant sounds that move forward, which are all **friendly consonant sounds**:

n (7%)
m (1%)
l (1%)

Despite being friendly consonant sounds, it is important to remember that these sounds *do* move forward, but only in **CV connections**.

As seen in [Lesson 3](#), **ng** does not move forward in CV or CC connections. It remains in the sentence, as immovable as a rock.

Quiz

#1. Which sound is the unvoiced partner of th?

- a) f
- b) tt
- c) t
- d) l

#2. Which sound is the voiced partner of sh?

- a) zz
- b) z
- c) sh
- d) s

#3. Which sound is the unvoiced partner of j?

- a) j
- b) zz
- c) sh
- d) ch

#4. Which sound is the voiced partner of p?

- a) q
- b) b
- c) d
- d) r

#5. True or false? Friendly consonant sounds move forward in CV connections.

- a) True.
- b) False.

Practice

1. Look at the consonant pairs on p.96. Try to learn these pairs by heart. Practice saying them out loud. Make sure the voiced sounds are VOICED and the unvoiced sounds are *unvoiced*. Which sounds are most difficult for you? Focus on them.

Unit 5.2 j / ch

5. j (2%) / ch (3%)

Although very few English words end with the letter 'j' ('the Raj' is a rare example), the sound j appears at the end of a syllable or word when the spelling is '-ge' or '-dge'.

There is one word ending in ch in the 100 Most Common Words in Written English list: 'which', at number 48. There are no words in this list ending in j.

a) Common words ending in '-ge':

| | | | | |
|---------|---------|--------|---------|---------|
| age | college | image | package | teenage |
| average | damage | large | page | usage |
| change | garage | manage | range | voyage |
| charge | huge | orange | stage | wage |

b) Common words ending in '-dge':

| | | | | |
|--------|------------|--------|-----------|----------|
| badge | cartridge | fridge | knowledge | porridge |
| bridge | dodge | fudge | lodge | ridge |
| budge | edge | hedge | nudge | wedge |
| cadge | footbridge | judge | pledge | wodge |

ch can appear at the end of a syllable or word when the spelling is '-ch' or '-tch'.

a) Common words ending in '-ch':

| | | | | |
|-------|--------|-------|--------|-------|
| beach | church | lunch | munch | such |
| bench | coach | march | reach | teach |
| bunch | each | match | rich | watch |
| catch | inch | much | search | which |

b) Common words ending in '-tch':

| | | | | |
|--------|----------|-------|---------|---------|
| batch | crutch | hitch | patch | stitch |
| blotch | dispatch | itch | pitch | stretch |
| catch | fetch | match | scratch | switch |
| clutch | hatch | notch | sketch | watch |

Practice: **j** / changes to **ch** in CC connections

(CV) judge a edge of package arrived damage it image of

(CC) hedge trimmers large ball fudge for fridge from pledge to

ch does not change in CV and CC connections:

(CV) batch of clutch a fetch any sketch out stretch it

(CC) catch some match day which does dispatch to watch the

Quiz

#1. True or false? There are many common words that end with the letter 'j'.

- a) True.
- b) False.

#2. _____ is the most common word in written English ending in ch.

- a) which
- b) watch
- c) rich
- d) much

#3. The _____ j sound is often spelled '-ge' and _____.

- a) voiced, '-ge'
- b) voiced, '-dge'
- c) unvoiced, '-dge'
- d) voiced, '-edge'

#4. The _____ ch sound is often spelled '-ch' and _____.

- a) unvoiced, '-itch'
- b) voiced, '-tch'
- c) unvoiced, '-ch'
- d) unvoiced, '-tch'

#5. _____ changes to _____ in _____ connections.

- a) ch, j, CC
- b) j, ch, CC
- c) j, ch, CV
- d) g, ch, CC

Practice

1. Practice saying the words ending with **j** on p.98 out loud. Can you add any more examples to each group?
2. Use these words to create new phrases with CV and CC connections, e.g., 'age of' / 'age that'. Practice saying them out loud, moving forward **j** in CV connections and moving it forward then changing it to **ch** in CC connections. Put your phrases into whole sentences and say them out loud.
3. Practice saying the words ending with **ch** on p.98 out loud. Can you add any more examples to each group?
4. Use these words to create new phrases with CV and CC connections, e.g., 'beach and' / 'beach was'. Practice saying them out loud, moving forward **ch** in both CV and CC connections.
5. Write sentences that contain at least two connections with **j** or **ch** moving forward, e.g., 'I pledge to watch the fridge in the kitchen.' Practice saying them out loud.
6. Practice saying the first set of phrases on p.99 out loud. Focus on the **j** sound in the CV connections and the very light **ch** sound in the CC connections. Record yourself saying them, then listen back, slow down the recording and listen to the sound connections. How did you do?
7. Practice saying the second set of phrases on p.99 out loud. Focus on making the **ch** sound in both CV and CC connections. Try to imagine longer sentences based around these phrases, e.g., 'Could you fetch any batch of pancakes for match day?' Say them out loud.

Unit 5.3 b / p

6. b (1%) / p (3%)

The sound **b** can appear at the end of a syllable or word when the spelling is '-b', '-be', or '-bb', as in the common words below.

There is one word ending in **p** in the 100 Most Common Words in Written English list: '**up**', at number 42. There are no words in this list ending in **b**.

a) Common words ending in '-b':

| | | | | |
|-------|------|-------|-----|--------|
| bulb | curb | job | rib | superb |
| cab | grab | kebab | rob | tab |
| celeb | herb | lab | rub | tub |
| club | hub | pub | sub | web |

b) Common words ending in '-be':

| | | | | |
|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| ascribe | cube | globe | robe | tribe |
| babe | describe | microbe | scribe | tube |
| bathrobe | diatribe | prescribe | strobe | vibe |
| bribe | earlobe | probe | subscribe | wardrobe |

c) Common words ending in '-bb':

The only common English word ending with '-bb' is the verb 'ebb'.

p can appear at the end of a syllable or word when the spelling is '-p', '-pe', or '-pp':

a) Common words ending in '-p':

| | | | | |
|------|-------|--------|-------|------|
| cap | gap | keep | pop | stop |
| cup | group | laptop | shop | tip |
| deep | help | lip | sleep | top |
| drop | jump | map | step | up |

b) Common words ending in '-pe':

| | | | | |
|----------|-----------|--------|-------|-----------|
| antelope | escape | pipe | shape | telescope |
| ape | grape | ripe | slope | type |
| cope | hope | rope | swipe | windpipe |
| envelope | landscape | scrape | tape | wipe |

c) Common words ending in '-pp':

The only common English word ending with '-pp' is the noun 'app'.

Practice: **b** / changes to **p** in CC connections

(CV) describe a superb and globe on tube of cab at

(CC) club night lab which job centre prescribe the hub cap

p does not change in CV and CC connections:

(CV) map of up on scrape off shop around keep on

(CC) envelope for stop them rope ladder grape juice shape that

Quiz

#1. The voiced consonant sound **b** is usually spelled _____ or _____. (Choose two.)

- a) be
- b) b
- c) bb
- d) bbe

#2. The most common word in written English ending in **p** is _____.

- a) keep
- b) up
- c) top
- d) hip

#3. The only common English word ending with '-pp' is _____.

- a) app
- b) hipp
- c) top
- d) apps

#4. In which phrase does **b** move forward and change to the unvoiced **p**?

- a) club and
- b) club night
- c) good night
- d) hub at

#5. **p** does not change as it moves forward in either a _____ or CC connection, because it is _____ sound.

- a) VC, a voiced
- b) CV, a voiced
- c) CV, an unvoiced
- d) VV, an unvoiced

Practice

1. Practice saying the words ending with **b** on p.7 out loud. Can you add any more examples to each group?
2. Use these words to create new phrases with CV and CC connections, e.g., 'cab arrived' / 'cab left'. Practice saying them out loud, moving forward **b** in CV connections and moving it

forward then changing it to p in CC connections. Put your phrases into whole sentences and say them out loud.

3. Practice saying the words ending with p on pp.101-102 out loud. Can you add any more examples to each group?
4. Use these words to create new phrases with CV and CC connections, e.g., 'cap and' / 'cap got'. Practice saying them out loud, moving forward p in both CV connections and CC connections.
5. Write sentences that contain at least two connections with b or p moving forward, e.g., 'The Hope Inn pub was open up to eleven pm.' Practice saying them out loud.
6. Practice saying the first set of phrases on p.102 out loud. Focus on the b sound in the CV connections and the very light p sound in the CC connections. Record yourself saying them, then listen back, slow down the recording and listen to the sound connections. How did you do?
7. Practice saying the second set of phrases on p.102 out loud. Focus on making the p sound in both CV and CC connections. Try to imagine longer sentences based around these phrases, e.g., 'There's a map of Japan next to the grape juice.' Say them out loud.

Unit 5.4 th / tt

7. th (2%) / tt (1%)

This is the only consonant pair that can be spelled the same: '-th'.

We can also spell the voiced th sound with '-the', as in 'bathe'. The unvoiced tt sound is always spelled with '-th' in English.

There is one word ending in th in the 100 Most Common Words in Written English list: 'with', at number 15. There are no words in this list ending in tt.

The two 'th' sounds in English can be tricky to pronounce, but it is well worth trying to learn them. Just like learning to make glottal stops, the 'th' sounds can be mastered with some practice.

You will need to spend some time in front of a mirror sticking your tongue out between your teeth for half a second at a time!

You will find some material to help you here:

[How to pronounce the 'th' sounds in English](#)

In general, words ending in th seem to be more obscure than words ending in tt. There aren't many common words ending in the sound th. The most common is 'with'.

There are not a great many words ending in tt either, so it is no surprise that this pair is so low down our ranking. Having said that, all ordinal numbers end with tt – like 'fourth', 'fifth', and 'sixth' – except for numbers ending with st, nd, and rd, e.g. 21st, 32nd, and 43rd.

Here are some examples of words ending in th:

a) '-th'

| | | | |
|-------|-------|--------|------|
| booth | loath | smooth | with |
|-------|-------|--------|------|

b) '-the'

| | | | |
|---------|--------------|----------|--------|
| bathe | lathe | scythe | swathe |
| blithe | lithe | seethe | teethe |
| breathe | loathe | soothe | tithe |
| clothe | mouth (verb) | sunbathe | writhe |

Here are some examples of common words ending in tt:

a) '-th'

| | | | | |
|---------|--------|--------|-------|-------|
| bath | depth | health | north | truth |
| beneath | earth | month | path | width |
| birth | faith | moth | south | worth |
| both | growth | mouth | teeth | youth |

Practice: **th** / changes to **tt** in CC connections

(CV) with a swathe of lithe as seethe about bathe in

(CC) smooth skin soothe James tithe for booth which mouth to

tt does not change in CV and CC connections:

(CV) growth is both of faith in teeth are width of

(CC) Earth Day bath time mouth was health centre north pole

Quiz

- #1. **th** and **tt** are the only pair of consonant sounds that can be _____ the same way.
- a) pronounced
 - b) moved forward
 - c) spelled
 - d) deleted
- #2. The verbs 'bathe', 'soothe', and 'mouth' all end with _____ consonant sound.
- a) an unvoiced
 - b) a voiced
- #3. Though difficult for many people, the two 'th' sounds are just physical actions that can be _____ with practice – a bit like _____.
- a) practiced, glottal stops
 - b) mastered, glottal stops
 - c) mastered, friendly consonant sounds
 - d) written, glottal stops
- #4. _____ is the most common word in written English ending in either **th** or **tt**.
- a) with
 - b) both
 - c) month
 - d) lathe
- #5. Which words do not end with **th**? (Choose up to three.)

Select all that apply:

- a) bathe
- b) bath
- c) with
- d) north
- e) breathe
- f) sunbathe
- g) youth

Practice

1. Practice counting ordinal numbers in English, focusing on the **tt** sound, e.g., 'first, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, tenth...' etc.

2. Practice saying the words ending with **th** on p.104 out loud. Can you add any more examples? How many of these words are new to you? Look up the meanings of the ones you don't know.
3. Use the words on p.104 to create new phrases with CV and CC connections, e.g., 'smooth arm' / 'smooth skin'. Practice saying them out loud, moving forward **th** in CV connections and moving it forward then changing it to **tt** in CC connections. Put your phrases into whole sentences and say them out loud.
4. Practice saying the words ending with **tt** on p.104 out loud. Can you add any more examples to each group?
5. Use the words on p.104 to create new phrases with CV and CC connections, e.g., 'depth of' / 'depth which'. Practice saying them out loud, moving forward **tt** in both CV connections and CC connections.
6. Write sentences that contain at least two connections with **th** or **tt** moving forward, e.g., 'Bob drew both pictures with an HB pencil.' Practice saying them out loud.
7. Practice saying the first set of phrases on p.105 out loud. Focus on moving forward the **th** sound in the CV connections and the very light **tt** sound in the CC connections. Record yourself saying them, then listen back, slow down the recording and listen to the sound connections. How did you do?
8. Practice saying the second set of phrases on p.105 out loud. Focus on moving forward the **tt** sound in both CV and CC connections. Try to imagine longer sentences based around these phrases, e.g., 'Earth Day came, but it was bath time at the North Pole.' Say them out loud.

Further Study

- [How to pronounce the 'th' sounds in English](#)
- [Ordinal Numbers](#)
- [Glottal Stops](#)

Unit 5.5 zz / sh

8. zz (0%) / sh (1%)

Though recognised as part of a **voiced/unvoiced consonant pair** with sh, zz does not appear at the end of a syllable in English, and therefore has no relevance here. Compared to other consonant sounds, zz is fairly rare. It appears in words ending with '-sion', e.g., 'vis**ion**', 'televis**ion**', 'revis**ion**', and 'vers**ion**', as well as the continent name 'As**ia**'. In these words, zz is spelled with the digraph '**si**'. In 'us**ua**l' and 'treas**ure**' the spelling is with the digraph '**su**'.

In contrast, the sound sh can be spelled in many ways, although '-sh' is the spelling you are most likely to find at the end of a syllable.

Other ways include:

| | | | | | | | |
|----|------------------|-----|----------------|----|-----------------|----|----------------|
| ch | ch ef | sc | fasc ia | sh | fish | su | sug ar |
| ci | spec ia l | sch | sch wa | ss | miss ion | ti | act ion |

Here are some examples of common words ending in sh:

a) '-sh'

| | | | | |
|----------|--------|---------|---------|--------|
| brush | dish | mash | push | trash |
| cash | finish | Polish | rash | vanish |
| childish | fish | posh | selfish | wash |
| crash | fresh | publish | stylish | wish |

Practice: **zz** / changes to **sh** in CC connections

Does not happen, because zz does not end a syllable

sh does not change in CV and CC connections:

(CV) finish on cash and publish a dish of fresh or

(CC) wish that trash can brush with washroom push button

Quiz

#1. The voiced consonant sound _____ does not appear at the _____ of a syllable.

- a) sh, end
- b) sh, beginning
- c) zz, end
- d) z, end

#2. zz is spelled _____ in words like 'vision' and _____ in 'usual' and 'treasure'.

- a) su, si
- b) si, su
- c) si, so
- d) si, sa

#3. True or false? The sound *sh* will change to the voiced sound *zz* in this phrase: 'fresh taste'.

- a) True
- b) False

#4. In the phrase 'cash in' the unvoiced consonant sound *sh* _____.

- a) remains
- b) is deleted
- c) is added
- d) moves forward

#5. In the phrase 'push button' the unvoiced consonant sound *sh* _____.

- a) is deleted
- b) remains
- c) moves forward
- d) is added

Discussion

1. Do you have any sounds in your L1 that rarely appear, like *zz* in English? Give examples of words containing them.

Practice

1. Practice saying the words with *zz* on p.107 out loud. Can you add any more words to this group?
2. Look at the eight different ways that the sound *sh* can be spelled on p.13. If possible, write at least three more words with each spelling. Practice saying them out loud.
3. Practice saying the words ending with *sh* on p.107 out loud. Can you add any more examples in each group.
4. Use the words on p.107 to create new phrases with CV and CC connections, e.g., 'brush off' / 'brush that'. Practice saying them out loud, moving forward *sh* in both CV and CC connections. Put your phrases into whole sentences and practice saying them out loud.
5. Write sentences that contain at least two connections with *sh* moving forward, e.g., 'I wish we were having mash for dinner.' Practice saying them out loud.
6. Practice saying the phrases with *sh* on p.107 out loud. Focus on making the *sh* sound in both CV and CC connections. Try to imagine longer sentences based around these phrases, e.g. 'He put the dish of uneaten crackers in the washroom trash can.' Say them out loud.

Unit 5.6 n

The remaining three consonant sounds that move forward are all **friendly consonant sounds**:

n (7%)
m (1%)
l (1%)

Although we know them as friendly consonant sounds that remain in CC connections, they do move forward in CV connections.

The other friendly consonant sound – **ng** – does not move forward in either CV or CC connections. (See [Lesson 3](#).)

1. n (7%)

Also in [Lesson 3](#), we learned that **n** occurs in friendly connections more frequently than the other friendly consonant sounds, at 45%, followed by **ng** (26%), **l** (18%), and finally **m** (11%). To recap, the prevalence of **n** is due to the following factors:

- 10 of the [100 Most Common Words in Written English](#) end with **n**, e.g., prepositions 'in' (7) and 'on' (14), and article 'an' (32)
- When we delete 'd' or 't' from the end of a syllable, we often end up with **n**, e.g., 'and', 'want', and 'went'
- It is a similar case with common suffixes ending in '-nt': we delete the **t** and can rest on the **n** sound, e.g., -ant, -iant, -ment
- Twelve of the first twenty numbers in English end with **n**, e.g., 'one', 'ten', and all '-teen' numbers
- There are 20+ common suffixes (word endings) ending in '-n', e.g., -ain, -an, -ion, -sion, and -tion
- Many common words end with **n**, e.g., 'woman', 'man', 'been', 'seen', etc. (see below)

The sound **n** can be spelled in **five** different ways – again, alone, inn, tonne, and design – but by far the most common way is 'n'. The other spellings all include **silent letters**: alone, inn, tonne, and design.

Although voiced, **n** is a friendly consonant sound and does not form part of a consonant pair, so it does not change moving forward.

Here are some examples of common words ending in **n**:

a) '-n'

| | | | | |
|-------|------|-------|------|-------|
| again | down | known | own | than |
| an | even | man | run | then |
| been | fun | men | seen | when |
| can | in | on | sun | woman |

b) '-ne' (the letter 'e' is silent)

| | | | | |
|--------|---------|------|--------|-------|
| alone | fine | mine | online | shine |
| anyone | gone | nine | phone | spine |
| done | lane | none | plane | stone |
| engine | machine | one | scene | tune |

c) '-nn' (the second letter 'n' is silent)

The only common English word ending with '-nn' is the noun 'inn'.

d) '-nne' (the letters 'ne' are silent)

The only common English word ending with '-nne' is the noun 'tonne'.

e) '-gn' (the letter 'g' is silent)

Apart from 'design', 'foreign', and 'sign', these words are high level low-frequency words:

| | | | | |
|---------|-------------|---------|----------|-----------|
| align | campaign | ensign | malign | reign |
| arraign | consign | feign | realign | resign |
| assign | countersign | foreign | reassign | sign |
| benign | design | impugn | redesign | sovereign |

Practice: **n** only moves forward in CV connections

(CV) Down Under mine is on our one is in a

(CV) none of men at sign on gone out nine of

n remains in CC connections, creating **good** sound connections as a **friendly consonant sound**:

(CC) fun day one month known for loan payment fine for

(CC) design course one said intern when the done deal

Quiz

#1. Which friendly consonant sound moves forward the most often?

- a) l
- b) m
- c) n
- d) ng

#2. n is more common than the other friendly consonant sounds for a variety of reasons, including:
(Choose two.)

- a) 10 of the 100 most common words in written English end with n
- b) Many common words begin with n
- c) There are 20+ common suffixes (word endings) ending in '-n'
- d) When we delete 'd' or 't' from the end of a syllable, we never end up with n

#3. We often end up with n when we delete d or t from the end of a word or syllable, for example,
_____ and _____.

- a) and, meet
- b) and, ment
- c) an, ment
- d) and, mean

#4. n is _____ consonant sound.

- a) a voiced
- b) an unvoiced
- c) a vowel
- d) a pleasant

#5. In the phrase 'mine is', n _____, while in the phrase 'fun day' it _____.

- a) moves forward, is deleted
- b) remains, moves forward
- c) moves forward, remains
- d) moves backward, remains

Discussion

1. Have you ever appreciated just how helpful friendly consonant sounds are in helping us to make connected speech in English?

Practice

1. Write ten common one-syllable English words ending in n.
2. Write ten words that end in nt and practice saying them in CC connections – deleting the t and adding a glottal stop. For example, 'sent him' > SEN_ HIM. Make short sentences, e.g. 'I sent him a letter.' Say them out loud.
3. Do the same for 'nd', e.g. 'lend them' > LEN THEM ('d' is deleted in a blend – see [Lesson 6](#)). Make short sentences, e.g. 'We often lend them money.' Say them out loud.
4. Write words ending in the suffix -ant, e.g. 'distant'. Practice saying them in CC connections – deleting the t and adding a glottal stop. For example, 'distant drum' > DISTAN_ DRUM. Make short sentences, e.g. 'We heard the distant drum.' Say them out loud.
5. Write words ending in suffixes with n, e.g. 'electrician'. Practice saying them in CC connections, e.g., 'electrician didn't. Make short sentences, e.g. 'The electrician didn't come today.' Say them out loud.
6. Practice saying the words ending with n on pp.109-110 out loud. Can you add any more examples to each group?

7. Focus on the words ending in '-gn' on p.110. How many of them are new to you? Look up the meanings of the ones you don't know.
8. Use the words on pp.109-110 to create new phrases with CV and CC connections, e.g., 'mine and' / 'mine was'. Practice saying them out loud, moving forward n in CV connections and letting it remain in CC connections. Put your phrases into whole sentences and practice saying them out loud.
9. Practice saying the first set of phrases on p.110 out loud. Focus on moving n forward. Try to imagine longer sentences based around these phrases, e.g. 'Three of my friends live Down Under. One is a salesperson, and the other is a doctor. None of them are dentists.' Say them out loud.
10. Practice saying the second set of phrases on p.110 out loud. Focus on letting n remain as a friendly consonant sound in the CC connections. Try to imagine longer sentences based around these phrases, e.g. 'The intern received a fine for his late loan payment.' Say them out loud.

Further Study

- [Lesson 3 – Friendly Connections](#)

Unit 5.7 m

2. m (1%)

m is the fourth and least common friendly consonant sound at the end of a syllable, after n, ng, and l. The sound m can be spelled in **seven** different ways – platform, home, programme, comb, palm, hymn, and hmm – but by far the most common way is ‘-m’. The other spellings all include **silent letters**: home, programme, comb, palm, hymn, and hmm.

Though **voiced**, m is a **friendly consonant sound** and does not form part of a consonant pair, so it does not change moving forward.

Common suffixes ending in m include:

-com, -dom, -im, -ism, -ium, -um, -some, -um

There are **six** high-frequency words ending in m in the 100 Most Common Words in Written English list: from (25), time (55), him (58), some (66), them (68), and come (76).

Apart from the frequent function words ‘l**m**’ and ‘a**m**’, other common words that end in m include:

a) ‘-m’

| | | | | |
|-------|------|--------|--------|------|
| alarm | farm | jam | room | team |
| album | film | medium | seem | term |
| arm | from | mum | storm | them |
| dream | him | museum | stream | Tom |

b) ‘-me’ (the letter ‘e’ is silent)

| | | | | |
|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| became | come | extreme | income | some |
| become | consume | fame | name | time |
| blame | costume | game | outcome | volume |
| came | crime | home | same | welcome |

c) ‘-mme’ (the letters ‘me’ are silent)

The only common English word ending with ‘-mme’ is the noun ‘programme’.

d) ‘-mb’ (the letter ‘b’ is silent)

| | | | | |
|----------|-------|----------|----------|---------|
| aplomb | climb | entomb | limb | succumb |
| benumb | comb | forelimb | numb | thumb |
| bomb | crumb | jamb | outclimb | tomb |
| catacomb | dumb | lamb | plumb | womb |

e) '-lm' (the letter 'l' is silent)

The only common English words ending with '-lm' are:

| | | | |
|--------|--------|--------|-------|
| balm | calm | napalm | psalm |
| becalm | embalm | palm | qualm |

f) '-mn' (the letter 'n' is silent)

The only common English words ending with '-mn' are:

| | | | | |
|--------|--------|---------|------|--------|
| autumn | column | condemn | hymn | solemn |
|--------|--------|---------|------|--------|

g) '-mm' (the second letter 'm' is silent)

The only common English words ending with '-mm' are 'hmm', 'mm', and 'umm'.

Practice: **m** only moves forward in CV connections

(CV) climb up autumn is mum allows balm and hymn eight

(CV) crumb of come inside calm us poem about arm ache

m remains in CC connections, creating **good** sound connections as a **friendly consonant sound**:

(CC) Pam said medium roast dumb thing mum was seem to

(CC) jam for condemn him comb your lamb chop some guys

Quiz

#1. m is the _____ common friendly consonant sound to appear at the end of a syllable.

- a) most
- b) second most
- c) least
- d) best

#2. The sound m can be spelled in _____ different ways, including with 'm', 'me', and 'mb'.

- a) four
- b) five
- c) six
- d) seven

#3. True or false? m forms a consonant pair with n.

- a) True.
- b) False.

#4. 'from', 'him', 'some', and 'come' are all examples of _____ words ending with m.

- a) fairly common
- b) high-frequency
- c) less common
- d) obscure

#5. In the phrase 'seem to' m _____, while in 'climb up' it _____.

- a) is deleted, moves forward
- b) is added, moves forward
- c) remains, is deleted
- d) remains, moves forward

Practice

1. Practice saying the words which show the seven spellings of m on p.113.
2. Write ten common one-syllable English words ending in m.
3. Write words ending in suffixes with m, e.g. 'intercom'. Practice saying them in CC connections, e.g., 'intercom broke'. Make short sentences, e.g. 'The intercom broke last night.' Say them out loud.
4. Practice saying the words ending with m on pp.113-114 out loud. Can you add any more examples to each group?
5. Use the words on pp.113-114 to create new phrases with CV and CC connections, e.g., 'dream about' / 'dream come'. Practice saying them out loud, moving forward m in CV connections and letting it remain in CC connections. Put your phrases into whole sentences and practice saying them out loud.
6. Practice saying the first set of phrases on p.114 out loud. Focus on moving m forward. Try to imagine longer sentences based around these phrases, e.g. 'Mum allows the dog to climb up on the furniture and calm us.' Say them out loud.
7. Practice saying the second set of phrases on p.114 out loud. Focus on letting m remain as a friendly consonant sound in the CC connections. Try to imagine longer sentences based around these phrases, e.g. 'Mum was serving lamb chops to some guys.' Say them out loud.
8. Record yourself saying phrases and/or sentences with m in both CV and CC connections. Slow down the recording and listen to the sound connections. Check your pronunciation.

Further Study

- [Lesson 3 – Friendly Connections](#)

Unit 5.8 l

3. l (1%)

l is the third most common friendly consonant sound at the end of a syllable, after **n**, and **ng**. The sound **l** can be spelled in four different ways – musical**l**, will, whistle**le**, and Elle – but by far the most common way is ‘-l’.

The other spellings all include **silent letters**: will, whistle, and Elle. Though **voiced**, **l** does not form part of a consonant pair, so it does not change moving forward.

Common suffixes ending in **l** include:

-al, -eal, -el, -ial, -le, -ol, -ple, -tal, -tle -ual, -ule

There are **three** high-frequency words ending in **l** in the 100 Most Common Words in Written English list: will / 'll (33), all (36), and well (89).

Other common words that end in **l** include:

a) ‘-l’

| | | | | |
|---------|-------|--------|--------|--------|
| bowl | goal | mail | real | travel |
| final | hotel | model | school | until |
| general | ideal | normal | social | useful |
| girl | local | pupil | total | usual |

b) ‘-ll’ (the second letter ‘l’ is silent)

| | | | | |
|------|------|------|-------|-------|
| all | full | sell | hill | small |
| ill | call | fall | ball | shall |
| will | tell | wall | cell | drill |
| well | bill | hall | still | smell |

c) ‘-le’ (the letter ‘e’ is silent)

| | | | | |
|---------|--------|--------|-------|-------|
| able | female | male | role | table |
| apple | file | middle | rule | title |
| cycle | hole | mile | sale | while |
| example | little | people | style | whole |

d) '-lle' (the letters 'le' are silent)

Apart from 'Elle', the only common English words ending with '-lle' are:

| | | | |
|-----------|----------|---------|----------|
| bagatelle | braille | gazelle | nouvelle |
| belle | chenille | grille | pastille |

Practice: **l** only moves forward in CV connections

(CV) tell us hole in bowl of boil it sell a

(CV) fall over middle of mile and people in style of

l remains in CC connections, creating **good** sound connections as a **friendly consonant sound**:

(CC) oil drum call me goalkeeper braille book whole day

(CC) social media all night school bag well done male nurse

4. ng (0%)

ng does not move forward in CV or CC connections.

Quiz

#1. The most common way of spelling the friendly consonant sound **l** is _____.

- a) '-le'
- b) '-lle'
- c) '-l'
- d) '-ll'

#2. b) Common _____ ending in **l** include: -al, -le, -ual, and -ule.

- a) prefixes
- b) suffixes
- c) syllables
- d) words

#3. _____ are the most common words ending in **l** in written English.

- a) 'will', 'wall', and 'well'
- b) 'will', 'all', and 'bell'
- c) 'till', 'all', and 'well'
- d) 'will', 'all', and 'well'

#4. In the words 'role', 'sale', and 'table', the letter 'e' is _____.

- a) voiced
- b) pronounced
- c) silent
- d) spelled

#5. We _____ the l in 'fall over', but it _____ in 'all night'.

- a) delete, remains
- b) move forward, remains
- c) move forward, is added
- d) add, remains

Practice

1. Practice saying the words which show the four spellings of l on p.116.
2. Write ten common one-syllable English words ending in l.
3. Write five phrases with 'l'll' + a vowel sound – e.g. 'l'll eat' – then five with 'l'll' + a consonant sound – e.g. 'l'll go'. Practice saying them out loud. Try the phrases with all the other pronouns, i.e., 'You'll', 'He'll', 'She'll', 'It'll', 'We'll', 'They'll'. Put them into sentences and pronounce them out loud.
4. Write words ending in suffixes with l, e.g. 'animal'. Practice saying them in CC connections, e.g., 'animal jumped'. Make short sentences, e.g. 'The animal jumped into the bushes.' Say them out loud, paying attention to all the elements of connected speech that occur.
5. Practice saying the words ending with l on pp.116-117 out loud. Can you add any more examples to each group?
6. Use the words on pp.116-117 to create new phrases with CV and CC connections, e.g., 'tell a' / 'tell me'. Practice saying them out loud, moving forward l in CV connections and letting it remain in CC connections. Put your phrases into whole sentences and practice saying them out loud.
7. Focus on the words with '-lle' spelling on p.117. Do you know all these words? Check the meaning of any new words. Make sentences and practice saying them out loud.
8. Practice saying the first set of phrases on p.117 out loud. Focus on moving l forward. Try to imagine longer sentences based around these phrases, e.g. 'Don't fall over into a hole in the middle of the road.' Say them out loud.
9. Practice saying the second set of phrases on p.117 out loud. Focus on letting l remain as a friendly consonant sound in the CC connections. Try to imagine longer sentences based around these phrases, e.g. 'The goalkeeper was looking for his school bag all night.' Say them out loud.
10. Record yourself saying phrases and/or sentences with l in both CV and CC connections. Slow down the recording and listen to the sound connections. Check your pronunciation.
11. Write ten sentences with CV connections where ng meets a vowel sound, e.g. 'We're playing outside', then ten sentences with CC connections where ng meets a consonant sound, e.g. 'They're getting ready for work'. Is there any difference for you? Is it comfortable to let ng remain in each kind of connection?

Further Study

- [Lesson 3 – Friendly Connections](#)

Lesson 6:

Deleting Sounds

Unit 6.1 Introduction

As previously discussed, the two aims of connected speech are to **remove the gaps** between words and **emphasise the sound spine**.

We do this by making **good** syllable connections, which are either **VC (vowel to consonant)** or with **friendly consonant sounds** m, n, l, and ng.

The actions we use are: **moving forward** consonant sounds ([Lesson 4](#) and [Lesson 5](#)), **deleting** consonant sounds ([Lesson 6](#)), and **adding** consonant sounds ([Lesson 7](#)) while we are speaking.

Remember that **deleting** a consonant sound does the same thing for the sound spine as **moving it forward**, removing the focus from the consonant sound and giving the vowel sound space to be heard:

good time >> goo time
CC VC

Deleting and then adding a **glottal stop** is even more effective in giving emphasis and space to the vowel sound, because it replaces t or d – the hardest-sounding consonant sounds – with half a second of silence (clear space) after the vowel sound. For example:

hot dog >> ho_ dog
CC VC

In our study of connections, the actions to fix **bad** connections occurred like this:

move forward – 60% of the time
delete – 25% of the time
add – 15% of the time

The sounds we delete are:

t (62% of the time)
d (28% of the time)
h (10% of the time)
duplicate sounds (4% of the time)

Note: deleting consonant sounds only occurs in **CV** and **CC** connections – where there is a consonant sound at the end of the first syllable in a pair.

By definition, we cannot delete consonant sounds in **VV** connections.

In summary, we delete a consonant sound in five cases:

1. When **t** is at the end of the first syllable in a pair and the next sound is a consonant, for example:

hot dog >> ho_ dog

We add a **glottal stop** (represented by _) in place of the t: ho_ dog

2. a) When **d** is at the end of the first syllable in a pair and the next sound is **t**, for example:

hard time >> har time

We do not need to add a glottal stop.

2. b) When **d** is part of a **consonant blend** – two or more consonant sounds ending in **d**, like: **nd**. For example:

phoned you >> phone you

d is deleted, leaving the friendly consonant sound n to rest on: phone you. There is no need to add a glottal stop.

3. When a consonant sound ends the first syllable in a pair and meets h at the beginning of the second syllable. We generally delete h from one of three function words: him, her, and his. For example:

I like him, but... >> I li kim, but...

h is deleted, leaving a CV connection – like 'im – so we must move forward the k at the end of 'like' to get a VC connection: 'I li kim, but...'

4. **Duplicate sounds**: when the consonant sound at the end of the first syllable in a pair is the same as the consonant sound at the beginning of the next syllable. For example:

bus stop >> bu stop

The first s sound is deleted, leaving a VC connection: 'bu stop'. We do not add a glottal stop, apart from with the sounds k, p, and t (see p.138).

Note: the sounds j / ch are pronounced in full, e.g., fudge jar and each chair.

Quiz

#1. The aims of connected speech are: (Choose two.)

- a) To make friendly sound connections
- b) To remove the gaps between words
- c) To speak more informally
- d) To emphasise the sound spine

#2. We achieve this by creating _____ connections between _____ as we speak.

- a) bad, syllables
- b) good, syllables
- c) good, words
- d) friendly, syllables

#3. The sounds we delete are, in order of how often we delete them, _____.

- a) t, d, h, duplicate sounds
- b) t, h, d, duplicate sounds
- c) d, t, h, duplicate sounds
- d) t, d, duplicate sounds, h

#4. True or false? We delete t in a CC connection and replace it with a glottal stop.

- a) True.
- b) False.

#5. _____ sounds occur when two of the same sound meet in a sound connection, e.g., _____.

- a) Friendly, 'bus stop'
- b) CV, 'bus driver'
- c) Duplicate, 'bus driver'
- d) Duplicate, 'bus stop'

Discussion

1. Were you aware that we often delete these sounds in English as we speak: t, d, h, and duplicate sounds? Do you regularly delete any sounds in your L1? Give examples.

Practice

1. Practice the phrase 'hot dog' on p.120. Write down more similar phrases, where t is deleted in a CC connection and replaced by a glottal stop. Practice saying them out loud.
2. Practice the phrase 'hard time' on p.120. Write down more similar phrases, where d is deleted because it meets t. Practice saying them out loud.
3. Practice the phrase 'phoned you' on p.121. Write down more similar phrases, where d is deleted because it is part of a blend. Practice saying them out loud.
4. Practice the phrase 'I like him' on p.121. Write down more similar phrases, where h is deleted at the start of a syllable in the words 'him', 'her', and 'his'. Practice saying them out loud.
5. Practice the phrase 'bus stop' on p.121. Write down more similar phrases, where two duplicate consonant sounds meet. Practice saying them out loud.

Unit 6.2 Deleting t

1. Deleting t

The most common sound to delete is t, which accounts for 62% of our deleted sounds.

While t moves forward in a CV connection – e.g., ‘get in’ >> ‘ge tin’ ([Lesson 4](#)) – we always delete t when it occurs at the end of a syllable and the next sound is a consonant.

We replace t with a glottal stop, represented by _ when t is deleted after a vowel sound or friendly consonant sound. For example:

| | | |
|------------|----|------------|
| bat cover | >> | ba_ cover |
| fit person | >> | fi_ person |
| went home | >> | wen_ home |
| got mail | >> | go_ mail |

We delete t because it is difficult for us to pronounce it next to another consonant sound. It would create a noticeable gap between syllables, which is what we are trying to avoid.

Using a glottal stop allows us to hear and acknowledge the missing t, without pronouncing it. Without the glottal stop the phrase may sound meaningless. For example, compare ‘fi_ person’ with ‘fiperson’.

Without a glottal stop we may end up with a different phrase altogether. For example:

‘great weekend’ >> delete t >>

with a glottal stop = ‘grea_ weekend’

without a glottal stop = ‘grey weekend’

It may look like we hate t in spoken English, since we delete it every time it appears at the end of a syllable in CC connections. It is unfortunate, then, that t is such a common sound in English. It is the final sound of no fewer than thirteen one-syllable high-frequency words in the [100 Most Common Words in Written English](#) list:

| | | | |
|-----------|------------|------------|-----------|
| that (8) | but (22) | get (47) | most (99) |
| it (11) | what (40) | just (57) | |
| not* (13) | out (43) | first (88) | |
| at (20) | about (45) | want (93) | |

**We can also include common negative auxiliary forms which are contractions of ‘not’, for example: ‘don’t’, ‘doesn’t’, ‘didn’t’, ‘won’t’, ‘haven’t’, etc.*

As a final consonant sound, t is pretty much everywhere in English. It appears at the end of a syllable in most sentences, and when the connection is CC, t is deleted and usually replaced by a glottal stop.

The t sound can be spelled in six different ways at the end of a syllable, but the most common is simply with ‘-t’:

a) '-t'

| | | | | |
|-------|------|-------|-------|-------|
| art | last | must | part | short |
| cut | let | net | point | start |
| got | lot | next | put | visit |
| great | met | night | set | yet |

The other ways of spelling t are: '-te', '-ed', '-ght', '-tt', and '-bt':

b) '-te'

| | | | | |
|------|--------|--------|--------|-------|
| ate | gate | mate | quite | vote |
| bite | invite | minute | rate | white |
| date | kite | note | site | write |
| fate | late | plate | update | wrote |

c) '-ed' (regular verbs: if the infinitive ends in an unvoiced consonant sound, '-ed' = t)

| | | | | |
|---------|---------|---------|----------|---------|
| baked | hoped | marked | picked | relaxed |
| blessed | kissed | matched | promised | stopped |
| checked | laughed | mixed | pushed | voiced |
| crashed | linked | passed | reached | watched |

d) '-ght'

Along with common modal verbs 'might' and 'ought', other common words include:

| | | | | |
|---------|---------|--------|--------|---------|
| alright | caught | flight | night | thought |
| bought | delight | fought | right | tight |
| bright | eight | height | sight | tonight |
| brought | fight | light | taught | weight |

e) '-tt'

There are not many words ending in '-tt' in English. Several of them are related to 'watt', i.e., 'kilowatt' and 'megawatt'. The other common words ending in '-tt' are: 'matt', 'putt', 'mutt', 'mitt' and 'boycott'.

f) '-bt' (with silent letter 'b')

There are only two common words ending in '-bt': 'debt' and 'doubt'.

In addition to common words ending with t, there are also many common suffixes which end in t.

For example:

| | | | |
|------|-------|------|------|
| -ate | -est | -ist | -let |
| -ect | -fort | -it | -ort |
| -ert | -iate | -ite | -urt |

As we saw in [Lesson 3](#), there are several common suffixes where, when we delete **t** at the end, we can rest on the friendly consonant sound **n** plus glottal stop. For example: -ant**t**, -ent**t**, -iant**t**, -ient**t**, and -ment**t**.

This is also true of common words ending in ‘-nt’ and ‘-lt’. For example:

| | | |
|---------------|----|---------------|
| content panel | >> | conten_ panel |
| point was | >> | poin_ was |
| felt good | >> | fel_ good |
| salt cellar | >> | sal_ cellar |

a) Common words ending in ‘-nt’:

| | | | | |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------|
| account | content | front | point | spent |
| amount | count | patient | present | talent |
| ant | current | payment | rent | want |
| client | event | plant | sent | went |

b) Common words ending in ‘-lt’:

| | | | | |
|-------|----------|---------|--------|--------|
| adult | catapult | fault | insult | salt |
| belt | consult | felt | knelt | smelt |
| bolt | dealt | guilt | melt | spoilt |
| built | default | inbuilt | result | vault |

c) Common words ending in ‘-mt’:

There is only one common word ending in ‘-mt’: ‘dreamt’. These days it is more usual to use the regular ‘-ed’ spelling: ‘dreamed’.

Note: there are no English words ending in **ng + t**.

(See [Lesson 3](#).)

Practice: **t** is deleted and replaced by a glottal stop in CC connections:

(CC) get the at seven airport to flight was hit by

(CC) that door at the what day eight will get there

(CC) about that start uni get married without my debit card

(CC) meet you don’t like haven’t got important to suit which

Quiz

- #1. We delete t because it is difficult for us to pronounce it next to another _____ sound.
- a) vowel
 - b) deleted
 - c) consonant
 - d) friendly
- #2. If we do not add a glottal stop when we delete t, we might end up with a _____ phrase, e.g., _____ becomes _____.
- a) different, 'grey weekend', 'great weekend'
 - b) similar, 'great weekend', 'grey weekend'
 - c) different, 'great weekend', 'grape weekend'
 - d) different, 'great weekend', 'grey weekend'
- #3. t is the final sound of no fewer than _____ one-syllable high-frequency words, e.g., _____.
- a) thirteen, 'that', 'it', 'not', 'quit'
 - b) thirteen, 'that', 'it', 'not', 'but'
 - c) ten, 'that', 'it', 'not', 'but'
 - d) thirteen, 'mint', 'it', 'not', 'but'
- #4. There are _____ different ways to spell t at the end of a syllable, including: _____.
- a) six, '-t', '-te', '-ed', '-gft'
 - b) eight, '-t', '-te', '-ed', '-ght'
 - c) six, '-t', '-te', '-ed', '-ght'
 - d) six, '-th', '-te', '-ed', '-ght'
- #5. When we delete t at the end of a syllable, we can often rest on a _____.
- a) friendly consonant sound
 - b) CV connection
 - c) consonant blend
 - d) voiced consonant sound

Discussion

1. Did you know that t can be spelled six different ways at the end of a syllable? Have you ever thought about studying the different ways that sounds are spelled in English? (See [Hard Words](#) – free English pronunciation course.)

Practice

1. Practice the phrases at the top of p.123. Focus on getting the glottal stop right. Don't make it too noticeable. It should serve to emphasise the vowel sound rather than stand out as a feature.
2. Practice the phrases on the right without the glottal stop and then with the glottal stop. Note how strange they sound without the glottal stop. It is a common pronunciation error to delete the t but not add the glottal stop, which stands in place of the deleted t.
3. Look at the high-frequency words on p.123. Say them out loud, then practice making phrases with CC connections – e.g. 'that day' – then putting the phrases into sentences – e.g. 'I saw Lisa that day' = 'tha_ day'. Practice saying them out loud.

4. Practice saying the words ending with *t* on p.124 out loud. Can you add any more examples to each group?
5. Use the words on p.124 to create new phrases with CC connections, e.g., 'art school' = 'ar_ school'. Practice saying them out loud, deleting *t*, then adding a glottal stop, if necessary. Note that you only need to add a glottal stop if *t* is deleted next to a vowel sound or friendly consonant sound. Put your phrases into whole sentences and say them out loud.
6. Look at the common suffixes on p.125. Think of words that use each suffix and put them into CC connections, e.g., 'delicate matter'. Practice saying them out loud, deleting *t* and adding a glottal stop, if necessary. Try putting them into sentences and saying them out loud.
7. Can you find any more suffixes that end with *t*? Complete the previous exercise using the new suffixes that you have found.
8. Practice the four phrases on the right on p.125, beginning with 'conten_ panel'. Practice resting on the friendly consonant sound, after deleting the *t*. Say them without the glottal stop. Notice how odd and unlike English they sound. Say the two word lists on p.7 out loud. Make phrases and add them to sentences. Practice saying them out loud, focusing on resting on the friendly consonant sound.
9. Practice saying the phrases on p.125 out loud. Focus on deleting the *t* and adding a glottal stop in each phrase. Record yourself saying them, then listen back; slow down the recording and listen to the sound connections. How did you do?
10. Use the words on the worksheet [200 One-Syllable Words that End with 't'](#) to make new phrases with CC connections. Practice saying them out loud, deleting *t* and adding a glottal stop, where necessary.
11. Do the same with phrases that you find in a real text.

Further Study

- [Glottal Stops](#)
- [200 One-Syllable Words that End with 't'](#)

Unit 6.3 Deleting d

2. Deleting d

As we know, t and d are a consonant pair ([Lesson 4](#)) – in effect the same sound, just with voiced (d) and unvoiced (t) versions. t is more difficult to pronounce than d, and must be deleted in CC connections, and usually be replaced by a glottal stop.

d is a little easier to pronounce than t, and can often **move forward** in CC connections, changing to the very light unvoiced t ([Lesson 4](#)). For example:

| | | |
|--------------------|----|-----------|
| head d girl | >> | he t girl |
| had d some | >> | ha t some |
| dad d rock | >> | da t rock |
| food d van | >> | foo t van |

As we discovered in [Lesson 4](#), d moves forward as d in **CV connections**. For example:

| | | |
|-------------------|----|-----------|
| had a | >> | ha da |
| would i t | >> | woul d it |
| you' d ask | >> | you d ask |
| showed u s | >> | show dus |

However, 28% of the sounds we delete are d. So, when do we delete d?

a) When d is at the end of the first syllable in a pair and the next sound is t. For example: hard **d** time = har t time

b) When d is part of a **consonant blend** – two or more consonant sounds ending in d, like: nd. For example: phoned **y**ou = phone y you

There is no glottal stop needed in either connection.

Let's look at both situations in more detail.

a) When d is at the end of the first syllable in a pair and the next sound is t. For example: hard **d** time

The reason for deleting d next to t is that if we moved forward d, it would change to the unvoiced t, creating a duplicate sound – two t's. When duplicate sounds meet, the first one is always deleted. (See [Unit 6.5](#).)

For example:

| | | | | | |
|------------|----|-----------|------------|----|-----------|
| add text | >> | a text | hard trip | >> | har trip |
| bid to | >> | bi to | head to | >> | hea to |
| could take | >> | coul take | red truck | >> | re truck |
| dad to | >> | da to | should try | >> | shoul try |
| good train | >> | goo train | speed test | >> | spee test |

Of course, we also delete d when it meets another d, for example: bad **d** day. We do not add a glottal stop: 'ba d day'. The first sound is deleted as a duplicate sound (see below).

There are four words ending in d in the 100 Most Common Words in Written English list:

and (5), would (37), good (65), could (67)

d is most often spelled with 'd'. For example:

| | | | | |
|-------|------|------|--------|-------|
| bed | fed | head | mud | road |
| bid | food | kid | need | said |
| board | had | lead | record | speed |
| did | hard | led | red | third |

There are two common words in which d is spelled with '-dd': 'add' and 'odd'. Other spellings of d are: '-de' and '-ld':

a) '-de'

| | | | | |
|--------|--------|---------|---------|-------|
| aside | divide | include | pride | side |
| beside | grade | inside | provide | tide |
| decade | guide | made | ride | trade |
| decide | hide | mode | rode | wide |

b) '-ld' (including silent letter 'l')

The only common words are the **modal verbs**: 'could', 'should', and 'would'.

In addition to common words ending with d, there are also many **common suffixes** which end in d. For example:

-ade -ard -ed -id -ide -land -oid

Finally, d is the sound at the end of **regular verbs** which end with a **vowel sound** (e.g., agreed, continu**ed**, deliver**ed**, enjoy**ed**, etc.) or a **voiced consonant sound** (e.g., call**ed**, happen**ed**, seem**ed**, liv**ed**, etc.).

b) When d is part of a **consonant blend** – two or more consonant sounds ending in d, like: nd. For example: phon**ed** you = phon**e** you.

As mentioned, a consonant blend is a combination of two or more consonant sounds which are **heard together** in a word. We delete the d and do not add a glottal stop.

This does not include silent letters, e.g., 'l' in 'could' is not part of a blend.

Three common final consonant **blends** which end in d are listed below. Notice that in each case when we delete d, we can rest on a **friendly consonant sound**, n, m, or l:

| | | | |
|----|---------------------|----|-----------|
| nd | bound to | >> | boun to |
| md | seem ed that | >> | seem that |
| ld | wild goos e | >> | wil goose |

Common words with final consonant blends ending in '-nd':

| | | | | | |
|------------|----|-----------|----------------|----|---------------|
| and went | >> | an went | husband was | >> | husban was |
| band knew | >> | ban knew | phoned me | >> | phone me |
| found some | >> | foun some | send me | >> | sen me |
| grand ma | >> | gran ma | thousand times | >> | thousan times |
| hand ball | >> | han ball | wind farm | >> | win farm |

Common **regular verbs** with final consonant blends ending in ‘-md’:

| | | | | | |
|--------------|----|-------------|---------------|----|-------------|
| blamed them | >> | blame them | fumed dad | >> | fume dad |
| claimed that | >> | claim that | roamed freely | >> | roam freely |
| famed for | >> | fame for | seemed to | >> | seem to |
| filmed them | >> | film them | tamed tigers | >> | tame tigers |
| framed photo | >> | frame photo | teamed with | >> | team with |

You may be concerned about making a grammatical mistake by, for example, changing past tense ‘blamed’ to infinitive ‘blame’.

Don’t be. We understand that this is past tense from the context, e.g., ‘He blamed them for what they did.’

The last word ‘did’ confirms that it is past tense. We do not register the loss of *d* as a grammatical error, because in fast speech it sounds natural and correct.

Common words with final consonant blends ending in ‘-ld’:

| | | | | | |
|---------------|----|--------------|------------|----|-----------|
| build many | >> | buil many | old man | >> | ol man |
| child benefit | >> | chil benefit | sold some | >> | sol some |
| field work | >> | fiel work | told them | >> | tol them |
| gold coin | >> | gol coin | wild panda | >> | wil panda |
| mild climate | >> | mil climate | world cup | >> | worl cup |

Other blends are possible, too, but they require two actions ([Lesson 8](#)). In each case, **delete** the *d* and then **move forward** the first consonant sound. For example:

| | | | |
|--------|-------------|----|-----------|
| ch + d | reached the | >> | rea chthe |
| k + d | liked the | >> | li kethe |
| z + d | used the | >> | u sthe |

(z changes to s in a CC connection)

Practice: **d** is deleted in CC connections – before *t* or when part of a **blend**:

(CC) grandmother decided to used my card to wind farm

(CC) blood test husband wears and jam reached the bound to

(CC) wild geese field work goldfish find them thousand pounds

(CC) windscreen need to behind my mild climate head to

Quiz

- #1. d and t are a consonant pair in which _____ is voiced and _____ is unvoiced.
- a) t, d
 - b) d, t
 - c) t, th
 - d) d, dd
- #2. True or false? d is easier to pronounce than t and often moves forward in CC connections.
- a) True.
 - b) False.
- #3. We delete d when: (Choose two.)
- a) d is at the beginning of the first syllable in a pair and the next sound is t.
 - b) d is part of a CV (consonant to vowel) connection.
 - c) d is at the end of the first syllable in a pair and the next sound is t.
 - d) d is part of a consonant blend – two or more consonant sounds ending in d, like: nd.
- #4. The consonant sound d is usually spelled _____ at the end of a syllable.
- a) '-dd'
 - b) '-ld'
 - c) '-d'
 - d) '-de'
- #5. Which sentence has an example of d being deleted as part of a consonant blend?
- a) He seem to be amused.
 - b) He seemed to be amused.
 - c) He seems to be amused.
 - d) He is seeming to be amused.

Discussion

1. What do you know about consonant blends in English? Do you have consonant blends in your L1? Give a few examples.
2. Does it worry you to say 'He seem to be OK' as past tense, instead of 'He seemed to be OK?' Yet, we do this in fast speech. What is important is the stressed vowel sound of the verb: ee, not the consonant sound at the end. Will you let yourself overcome the fear of seeming incorrect according to your years of study of English, and accept that the actions of connected speech are what we do?

Practice

1. Practice the first four phrases on p.128. Focus on the right-hand phrases. The t sound should be very quiet and light – barely noticeable, but there, as a representative of the deleted d. Do you find the phrases on the right easier to pronounce than their original versions? Why? / Why not?
2. Practice the second four phrases on p.128, with d moving forward in the CV connections.
3. Practice the ten phrases on p.128, with d deleted and no glottal stop in place of it. Write five more similar phrases and practice them out loud.

4. Practice saying the words ending with *d* on p.129 out loud. Can you add any more examples to each group?
5. Use the words on p.129 to create new phrases with CC connections, e.g., 'road sign' = ROA TSIGN. Practice saying them out loud, either deleting *d* (if it meets *t*) or moving it forward and changing it to *t*. Put your phrases into whole sentences and say them out loud.
6. Look at the common suffixes on p.129. Think of words that use each suffix and put them into CC connections, e.g., 'lemonade stand'. Practice saying them out loud, deleting *d* or moving it forward and changing it to *t*. Try putting them into sentences and saying them out loud.
7. Can you find any more suffixes that end with *d*? Complete the previous exercise using the new suffixes.
8. Look at the regular verbs on pp.130. Make a list of ten more common regular verbs that end with a) a vowel sound, b) a voiced consonant sound and add '-ed'. Practice making phrases with them in CC connections, deleting or moving forward *d* as required, e.g., 'agreed to' = AGREE TO.
9. Look at the [common consonant blends in English](#) worksheet. Focus on the final consonant blends with 'ld' and 'nd'.
10. Look at the three common final consonant blends on p.129. Find more blends with ld, md, and nd. Write a list of words for each blend, then make phrases and say them out loud, deleting the *d* in each phrase. How does it feel to you, saying 'boun to' instead of your usual 'bound to', with *d* pronounced? Does it feel wrong? Yet, it is correct in spoken English.
11. Practice the three sets of phrases on p.130 out loud. Put them into sentences and say them out loud, observing other connected speech rules.
12. Look at the other possible blends on p.130. Can you think of any more final consonant blends ending in *d*? For example, g + d >> 'logged the' = LO GTHE.
13. Practice saying the two sets of phrases on p.130 out loud. Focus on deleting the *d* in each phrase. Make sure that you know why the *d* is deleted in each phrase: either because of *t* or a blend. Record yourself saying them, then listen back; slow down the recording and listen to the sound connections. How did you do?

Further Study

- [Common Consonant Blends in English](#)
- [Regular Verbs](#)

Unit 6.4 Deleting h

3. Deleting h

This only occurs when the first sound in a pair is a consonant sound, and the second is h from one of these three function words: **him**, **her**, **his** – or variants **himself** and **herself**.

We delete h, creating a **CV connection**.

Then we have to move forward the consonant sound, to get a VC connection.

For example:

| | | |
|-------------------------------|----|-----------------------------|
| I gave him a book. | >> | I ga vi ma book. |
| He made her some soup. | >> | He ma der some soup. |
| I bought his car. | >> | I bor ti scar. |

As you can see, we sometimes need **two or more actions** to get the VC or friendly connection ([Lesson 8](#)).

When it comes to deleting sounds, we delete h 10% of the time, making it the third most common sound to delete, after t and d. It does not need to happen very often, but it can happen.

We do it to make the function words **him**, **her**, and **his** sound weaker. In turn this makes the stressed syllables sound stronger – emphasising the **sound spine**. There is no mountain without the valleys! Function words are the weak-stressed 'valleys' and must be **reduced** rather than pronounced loudly with equal stress to content words:

| | | | |
|-----|----|----|---|
| him | >> | im | |
| her | >> | er | |
| his | >> | iz | <i>a schwa sound; sounds like article 'a'</i> |

If you put stress on them – by pronouncing 'h' + a strong vowel sound – we may have problems identifying the strong syllables which should have the strong vowel sounds. In short, it messes up the **sound spine** ([Lesson 1](#)).

Deleting h from the beginning of these function words is acceptable in **Standard English**. The trick is to do it in fast speech so that the listener is unaware of the 'h' being dropped and focuses instead on the sound spine.

Some native speakers of English take the deletion of h further and delete it from many or even *every* word beginning with the letter 'h'.

For example:

I'll 'ave an 'oliday in 'arrogate with 'elen.

(I'll **h**ave a **h**oliday in **H**arrogate with **H**elen.)

What 'appened at the 'ospital, 'arold?

(What **h**appened at the **h**ospital, **H**arold?)

This is much more noticeable. The deletion is pronounced in an obvious way and not hidden in fast speech. It is very common in many accents and dialects of English, e.g., **Estuary English**, which is most associated with London and the area around the Thames Estuary.

It is not considered standard English, so we do not focus on it during this course.

Of course, a few common English words beginning with the letter 'h' already have the 'h' dropped in pronunciation. For example: **heir**, **homage**, **honest**, **honour**, and **hour**.

h is usually spelled: 'h-':

There are five high-frequency words beginning with h in the 100 Most Common Words in Written English list. We can discount the first two – 'have' (9) and 'he' (16) – because we normally pronounce the h in these words.

We delete the h in the other three words, though: '**his**' (23), '**her**' (29), and '**him**' (58).

a) More common words beginning with 'h-':

| | | | | |
|-------|------|-------|------|-------|
| had | has | head | here | home |
| half | hat | heart | hi | hot |
| hand | have | hello | high | house |
| happy | he | help | hit | how |

h is spelled 'wh-' in a few important words, including: '**who**', '**whom**', '**whoever**', '**whose**', '**whole**', '**wholesale**', '**wholesome**', and '**wholly**'.

I do not want to be too prescriptive, because it may be that, in fast speech, other **function words** beginning with h may be deleted too. For example:

I said **he** just left. >> I **sai** **de** ju sleft. ('h' is deleted in 'he')

However, we should be careful not to **overdo** the deletion of h, because then we may move away from Standard English towards accent, dialect, and slang.

A note about deleting h and t:

As described above, when t meets another consonant sound, we delete it and add a glottal stop. For example:

I got him a new bike. >> I go_ him a new bike.

With the words **him**, **her**, and **his**, however, this rule is ignored. After deleting the h, in the resulting CV connection, we move forward the t and the result sounds more fluent:

I go ti ma new bike.

Here are more examples with **her** and **his**. Further contractions may also be possible:

I wan_ her to stay. >> I wan ter to stay. >> I wanna to stay.
I pu_ his cake there. >> I pu ti sca kthere. >> I pudis ca kthere.

VC Connections:

In fast speech, we may also delete the h at the beginning of **him**, **her**, **his**, **himself**, and **herself** in **VC connections**. This creates a VV connection ([Lesson 7](#)). We delete the h then add w, y, or r:

| | | | |
|-----------------|----|-------------|-----|
| show him | >> | show [w] im | + w |
| buy his | >> | buy [y] iz | + y |
| saw her | >> | saw [r] | + r |

However, this is moving away from Standard English. It is not normally necessary to alter a VC connection ([Lesson 2](#)).

Practice: **h** is deleted at the beginning of a syllable in CC connections, then the first consonant moves forward:

| | | |
|--------------------------|----|---------------------------|
| ask h er | >> | a sker |
| get h erself | >> | ge ter self |
| tell h im | >> | te lim |
| teach h imself | >> | tea ch im self |
| book h is | >> | boo k is |
| like h erself | >> | li k er self |
| drive h is | >> | dri v is |
| read h er | >> | rea d er |
| put h im | >> | pu t im |
| question h imself | >> | que stio n im self |

Practice **deleting h** and **moving forward** in these short phrases:

| | | | |
|--------------------|-----------------|--------------------|---------------|
| with her grandma | [wi tha] | bought herself | [bor te self] |
| when he was young | [whe ne was] | that his friend | [tha tiz] |
| I think he said | [thing ke said] | knitted him | [kni te dim] |
| ask about her | [a bou ta] | on his way to work | [o niz] |
| has to find his | [fin diz] | lose her phone | [lo za] |
| selling her house* | [se lling a] | taking her puppy* | [ta king a] |

*Note that when the first syllable ends with *ng*, it does not move forward ([Lesson 3](#)).

Quiz

#1. We can delete **h** from the following words in fast speech: (Choose three.)

- a) help
- b) him
- c) hi
- d) her
- e) his
- f) hot

#2. By deleting **h** as the second sound in a CC connection, we create a _____ connection, meaning the consonant sound has to _____.

- a) CC, move forward
- b) CV, be deleted
- c) CV, move forward
- d) VC, move forward

#3. True or false. Some native speakers decide to delete **h** from the beginning of many or all English words.

- a) True.
- b) False.

#4. The sound h is spelled 'wh-' in several common words, including: (Choose up to three.)

- a) 'who'
- b) 'when'
- c) 'whoever'
- d) 'which'
- e) 'how'
- f) 'whole'

#5. Which example shows h being deleted in a good VC connection, creating a VV connection that needs to have a consonant sound added?

- a) showed him >> show dim
- b) show him >> show wim
- c) tell her >> te ller
- d) meet him >> mee tim

Discussion

1. Do you know any native speakers of English who consistently 'drop' the h from the beginning of words. Do they have a particular accent? What does 'h-dropping' tell us about class? What effect does it have on your ears?
2. Look at the phrase 'I said he just left' on p.134. Do you believe that we should extend 'h-dropping' to other function words beginning with h, e.g., 'he'? Why? / Why not?

Practice

1. Write down ten phrases where the first word ends with a consonant sound and the second word is 'him', e.g. 'tell him'. Practice saying them out loud, deleting the h and moving forward the consonant sound. Record yourself and listen back, slowing down the recording. How did you do?
2. Do the same with 'her', 'his', 'himself', and 'herself'. Put these phrases into sentences and keep your speech fairly fast, not drawing attention to the deleted h, e.g., 'Tell him we're ready to go' = te lim. How do you feel saying these phrases without the h?
3. Practice the three phrases at the top of p.133. Focus on deleting h and moving forward the final consonant sounds.
4. Practice the sentences with too much 'h-dropping' on p.133 out loud. How do they sound to you? Why is this considered 'wrong' in Standard English? Search online for the topic of 'h-dropping' and see what the experts say. Do you agree with them?
5. Practice saying the words beginning with h at the top of p.134 out loud. Can you add any more examples?
6. Look at the text beneath this word list. Can you find any more examples of when the sound h is spelled with 'wh', like 'who'?
7. Practice saying the sentence on p.134: 'I got him a new bike.' Say it with t deleted, plus a glottal stop, then with h deleted and t moved forward. Which sounds more fluent? The latter is the preferred option in connected speech.
8. Practice the other sentences on p.134 too. How do you feel about the contractions: 'WANNA' = 'WANT HER' and 'PUDIS' = 'PUT HIS'? The main aim is to hear the respective stressed vowel sounds loudly and clearly: o from 'want' and uu from 'put'. We achieve this, so communication occurs. Make up your own sentences to practice saying out loud.

9. Make a note of the important exception to the VC connection rule, shown on p.134. We do take a perfect VC connection, e.g., 'show him', delete h, creating a bad VV connection (on purpose), which requires the insertion of w to make it right. (See [Lesson 7: Adding Sounds](#).) Write more phrases that start off as good VC connections but change to bad VV connections and then need correcting. Practice them out loud.
10. Practice saying the first list of phrases on p.135 out loud. Focus on deleting the h in each phrase and moving forward the previous consonant sound. Record yourself saying them, then listen back, slow down the recording and listen to the sound connections. How did you do?
11. Practice the second list of phrases on p.135 out loud. Can you add any more short phrases? Practice them out loud.

Further Study

- [What is English Pronunciation?](#)

Unit 6.5 Deleting duplicate sounds

4. Deleting duplicate sounds

The other time (4%) when we delete a sound is when there are two of the same consonant sounds in a **CC connection**. In these cases, we delete the first sound. The result in each case is usually a VC or friendly connection.

For example:

| | | | | |
|-------|------------|----|----------|---|
| l > l | tell Lena | >> | te Lena | result: no glottal stop – VC connection |
| s > s | dance solo | >> | dan solo | result: no glottal stop – friendly connection |

We do not add a glottal stop with **voiced** consonant sounds, e.g.

| | | | |
|-------|----------|----|---------|
| g > g | bag grab | >> | ba grab |
|-------|----------|----|---------|

We add a glottal stop when the sounds are **unvoiced** k, p, and t:

| | | | | |
|-------|--------------|----|--------------|----------------------|
| k > k | quick coffee | >> | qui_ coffee | result: glottal stop |
| p > p | keep product | >> | kee_ product | result: glottal stop |
| t > t | heat timer | >> | hea_ timer | result: glottal stop |

We do not need to pronounce both sounds because our brains register both words, without having to hear every consonant sound. We delete the first sound because it is very difficult for us to pronounce both consonant sounds together in a **CC connection**. It is *possible*, but it is *awkward*.

It may, however, be normal practice in your language, in which case it may feel perfectly natural to you. It doesn't to us!

Duplicate sounds occur fairly rarely – 4% of the time when deleting sounds, according to research – but we need to know what to do when it does happen. Remember, this only applies in CC connections. For VV connections, see [Lesson 7](#).

Practice with all possible **voiced** consonant sounds (no glottal stop):

| | | | | |
|----|------------|----|-----------|----------------------|
| b | Rob bought | >> | Ro bought | |
| d | rode down | >> | ro down | |
| g | big game | >> | bi game | |
| l | full lake | >> | fu lake | |
| m | home maker | >> | ho maker | |
| n | pin number | >> | pi number | |
| th | with the | >> | wi the | |
| v | have value | >> | ha value | |
| z | Paul's zoo | >> | Paul zoo | <i>friendly con.</i> |

Not Possible:

| | |
|----|---|
| j | <i>it is necessary to pronounce both j sounds without moving forward, e.g., hedge joins</i> |
| ng | <i>ng cannot start a syllable</i> |
| w | <i>w is only part of a vowel sound at the end of a syllable</i> |
| y | <i>y is only part of a vowel sound at the end of a syllable</i> |
| r | <i>r is only part of a vowel sound at the end of a syllable</i> |
| zz | <i>zz cannot end or start a syllable</i> |

Practice with all possible **unvoiced** consonant sounds:

| | | | |
|----|--------------------------------------|----|--------------|
| f | have faith (v changes to f) | >> | ha faith |
| k | pack clothes (glottal stop) | >> | pa_ clothes |
| p | hip patient (glottal stop) | >> | hi_ patient |
| s | boss said | >> | bo said |
| sh | brush should | >> | bru should |
| t | hot take (glottal stop) | >> | ho_ take |
| tt | worth thinking | >> | wor thinking |

Not Possible:

| | |
|----|--|
| ch | <i>like its partner j, it is necessary to pronounce both ch sounds without moving forward, e.g., watch chain</i> |
| h | <i>h is not pronounced at the end of a syllable</i> |
| hh | <i>hh is not used in Standard English</i> |

Practice: the **first sound** is deleted in CC connections if there are **duplicate** sounds:

(CC) this session his zoo hit tale wash sheets gap pool

(CC) beneath theatre of fun wood door all ladies rob banks

Practice: the **first sound** is deleted in CC connections if there are **duplicate** sounds (*except j and ch*):

(CC) site table rich chap black car shelf full fridge joke

(CC) said Dan save four fourth thought shrub border thick card

Quiz

#1. Duplicate sounds are the _____ common kind of sound that require deletion.

- a) most
- b) least

#2. Which phrases have examples of duplicate sounds? (Choose two.)

- a) hot coffee
- b) quick coffee
- c) go out
- d) hot topic

#3. We do not need to add a glottal stop unless the duplicate sounds are _____. (Choose up to three.)

- a) k
- b) p
- c) b
- d) d
- e) t
- f) g

#4. Some consonant sounds cannot be _____ sounds, like ng, which cannot be at the start of a syllable, and _____ which are only part of a vowel sound at the end of a syllable.

- a) duplicate, m, n, ng
- b) friendly, w, y, r
- c) duplicate, c, q, x
- d) duplicate, w, y, r

#5. j and ch are different because we have to pronounce them both when they meet as duplicate sounds, e.g., (Choose two.)

- a) fudge shop
- b) rich chap
- c) rich fudge
- d) fudge jar

Practice

1. Practice the first two phrases on p.138, moving from bad connection to good connection. How do they feel when you say them? What is the difference to you?
2. Practice the next four phrases on p.138. Pay particular attention to the three unvoiced consonant sounds that need a glottal stop when they meet a duplicate sound: k, p, and t. Note this exception.
3. Write five phrases with words that have duplicate sounds when they meet, e.g., 'bag grab'. Practice saying them as bad CC connections, then change them to VC connections by deleting the first consonant sound. How does it feel? What is the difference for you?
4. Practice saying the bad then good connections in the group of nine phrases on p.138 out loud. Try to put them into short sentences, e.g., 'Rob bought a new car.' Say them out loud, paying attention to the other elements of connected speech that come into play. Record yourself, slow it down, then check how you sound.

5. Make a note of the nine exceptions on p.139 – the consonant sounds which cannot meet a duplicate, for various reasons. Make sure that you understand the reasons for these exceptions.
6. Focus on making phrases where j meets j and ch meets ch. In these cases, we must pronounce both sounds equally – we cannot delete the first sound. Practice your phrases out loud. Get used to this very small anomaly in connected speech.
7. Practice saying the bad then good connections in the phrases beginning with 'have faith' on p.21 out loud. Pay particular attention to k, p, and t, which need a glottal stop. Try to put them into short sentences, e.g., 'My boss said that I did well.' Say them out loud, paying attention to the other elements of connected speech that come into play. Record yourself, slow it down, then check how you sound.
8. Practice saying the phrases at the bottom of p.139 out loud. Focus on deleting the first consonant in each phrase (if necessary). Note the two phrases with j and ch, where you cannot delete the first sound: 'fridge joke' and 'rich chap'. Note also the five phrases with k, p, and t, which require a glottal stop. Record yourself saying them, then listen back, slow down the recording and listen to the sound connections. How did you do?

Lesson 7:

Adding Sounds

Unit 7.1 Introduction

This lesson will focus mainly on **practice**, because the concept of **adding sounds** is very simple: if two vowel sounds meet, we add a consonant sound – **w**, **y**, or **r**. Adding sounds only occurs in VV (vowel to vowel) connections, not VC, CV, or CC.

The first syllable is pronounced as usual with the second syllable prefaced by the consonant sound.

For example:

| | | |
|---|---------|----------|
| w | few of | few wof |
| y | say it | say yit |
| r | four of | four rof |

The reason for adding consonant sounds is – like **moving forward** and **deleting** – to make our language easier to understand by emphasising the **sound spine**.

It is hard for native speakers to pronounce two vowel sounds together:

few of

Two vowel sounds pronounced together create a **gap**. Adding a consonant sound – **w**, **y**, or **r** – closes the gap, and gives us the needed VC connection every time:

few wof

Remember that **adding** a vowel sound – **w**, **y**, or **r** – **extends** the vowel sound, making it longer. Although they are consonant sounds, **w**, **y**, and **r** act as extensions of the vowel sounds that they follow:

| | | | | |
|---|---------|-------------|---|----|
| w | few of | few [w] of | = | VC |
| y | say it | say [y] it | = | VC |
| r | four of | four [r] of | = | VC |

But which consonant sound do we add in a VV connection? There are a few ways to know:

1. Follow the **sound**
2. Consider the end **letter**
3. Learn the **patterns**

1. Follow the **sound**:

Say the **vowel sound** at the end of the first syllable continuously for a few seconds and it will turn into **w**, **y**, or **r**.

For example, if you say the **oo** of 'new' your lips will naturally round to form a **w** sound: new (w) idea.

2. Consider the **letter** at the end of the first syllable:

- If it is 'r', connect with **r**. For example: car [r] is
- If it is 'y', connect with **y**. For example: boy [y] and
- If it is 'w' connect with **w**. For example: know [w] any

As we know from [Lesson 2](#), the letters 'r', 'w', and 'y' at the end of a syllable are silent, unless they meet a vowel sound, when they become **activated** and are pronounced as consonant sounds.

Note: this is a **general rule** because many vowel sounds at the end of syllables are not spelled with 'w', 'y', or 'r' – for example **oo** in 'who'.

Another **exception** is words ending with ‘-aw’, like ‘jaw’, ‘law’, ‘saw’, and ‘raw’, which, despite ending with ‘w’, all connect with r:

Law [r] and order.
I saw [r] a cow.

Sometimes other spellings apply. For example:

- banana [r] is ‘-a’ + r

schwa sound usually connects to the next vowel sound with r

- see [y] a ‘-ee’ + y

long ee connects to the next vowel sound with y

- go [w] out ‘-o’ + w

diphthong eu connects to the next vowel sound with w

3. Or, you could just learn the **patterns** in this unit, i.e., which vowel sounds match with w, y, or r

We **add** consonant sounds in around 14% of bad connections. The other actions – **moving forward** and **deleting** – are far more common.

We **move forward** consonant sounds 58% of the time and **delete** consonant sounds 28% of the time.

It is more common to add **r** than the other two sounds. We add:

| | |
|----------|-----------------|
| r | 40% of the time |
| y | 30% of the time |
| w | 28% of the time |

There are a few very **rare** words in which we add **g** after **ng** in a CV connection to get a friendly CC connection. For example:

| | | |
|--------------------|------------|-------------------|
| kang ga roo | <i>not</i> | kang a roo |
| bung ga low | <i>not</i> | bung a low |

This is a side-effect of **ng** not being able to move forward ([Lesson 3](#)).

It is worth noting that both words are relatively recent **loan words** and not from European roots: ‘kangaroo’ is from Indigenous Australian languages, while ‘bungalow’ is from Hindi.

Quiz

#1. If two _____ sounds meet in a sound connection, we add a consonant sound – _____ – which changes it from a _____ connection to a _____ connection.

- vowel, w, y, or r, VC, VV
- vowel, w, y, or r, VV, VC
- consonant, w, y, or r, VV, VC
- vowel, w, y, or n, VV, VC

#2. By adding one of these consonant sounds, we _____ the previous vowel sound, which helps to _____ the sound spine.

- a) extend, reduce
- b) extend, delete
- c) shorten, emphasise
- d) extend, emphasise

#3. True or false? It is hard for native speakers of English to pronounce two vowel sounds together.

- a) True.
- b) False.

#4. It is more common to add r than w or y. We add r _____ of the time, y _____ of the time, and w _____ of the time.

- a) 40%, 30%, 28%
- b) 40%, 20%, 28%
- c) 40%, 30%, 20%
- d) 30%, 40%, 28%

#5. There are a few ways to know which consonant sound to add in a VV connection: (Choose up to three.)

- a) Follow the sound
- b) Have a guess
- c) Consider both syllables
- d) Consider the end letter
- e) Learn the patterns
- f) Write each letter carefully

Discussion

1. Will you commit to spending time practicing changing VV connections into VC by adding w, y, and r? Or will you continue your current incorrect style of speaking English?
2. Do you add sounds which are not in the spelling of words when you speak in your L1? How phonetic is your L1? Does it sound exactly as it is written?
3. When trying to work out which consonant sound to add in a VV connection, do you prefer to follow the sound, consider the end letter, or learn the patterns? Or a mix of all three options. Give reasons.
4. Did you know that adding sounds is less common than moving forward or deleting sounds? Why do you think that is?

Practice

1. Practice the three phrases beginning with 'few of' on p.143, moving from bad connection (VV) to good connection (VC). How do they feel to you? Do you find the good connections easier to pronounce?
2. Practice the three phrases again, moving from bad connection (VV) to good connection (VC). Notice how the added sounds act as extensions to the vowel sound, emphasising them, and rounding them out, thus increasing the volume and strength of the sound spine.
3. Practice the three phrases with added sounds beginning with 'car is' on p.143. Write five more phrases in which the sounds r, y, and w need to be added, e.g., 'chair [r] is'. Practice them

out loud, then build short sentences around them, e.g., 'That chair is mine.' Practice saying them out loud. Record yourself, slow it down, and check your pronunciation. How did you do?

4. Notice the two exceptions on p.144, where a different sound is added – not w, y, or r, but g! Can you think of any more words that include ng + g to add to this list?

Further Study

- More words which include ng + g: anger, angle, angry, bangle, banquet, bi-lingual, bingo, bongo, bungalow, conga, dangle, dingle, dingo, dongle, extinguisher, fangled, finger, fungal, fungus, hunger, hungry, jangle, jingle, kangaroo, language, linger, lingo, lingual, longer, mingle, penguin, sanguine, single, stronger, tangle, tingle, wonga, younger
- [Loan Words](#)

Unit 7.2 VV connections

VV connections are less common than the other connections because fewer words begin or end with a vowel sound in English.

In more syllable pairs, the first sound is a consonant sound, which meets either a vowel sound (CV connection) or another consonant sound (CC connection).

However, there are many common **function words** that end with a vowel sound, and these are often the words that create VV connections when they meet another word beginning with a vowel sound.

In the [100 Most Common Words in Written English](#) list there are **42 high-frequency words** ending with a vowel sound.

26 of them are **function words** – including almost half (18) of the most common 40 words:

| | | | | | |
|---------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|---------|
| 1. the | 18. you | 30. she | 49. go | 69. see | 84. two |
| 2. be | 19. do | 31. or | 50. me | 70. other | 85. how |
| 3. to | 24. by | 34. my | 56. no | 73. now | 86. our |
| 6. a* | 26. they | 38. there | 59. know | 75. only | 90. way |
| 10. I | 27. we | 39. their | 62. into | 78. over | 92. new |
| 12. for | 28. say | 41. so | 63. year | 80. also | 95. any |
| 16. he | 29. her | 46. who | 64. your | 82. after | 98. day |

16 of the words are **content words**

We can put these words into groups according to which sound we need to add:

Add r (11 words)

for, or
her
there, their
year
your, our
other, over, after

Add y (16 words)

the /ii/
be, he, we, she, me
I
by, my, only, any
they
say, way, day
see

Add w (14 words)

to, do, so, who, go, no, into, also
you
know, now, how
two
new

*a = impossible because it does not connect with a vowel sound – e.g. ~~a-egg~~. Use 'an' instead

Most of these words have the **word shape** C-V: they start with a consonant sound and end with a vowel sound.

If the next word or syllable begins with a vowel sound, you will have a VV connection.

Words in the second part of the syllable pair may have V-C (vowel-consonant) or V-V (vowel-vowel) word shapes:

they ate >> they [y] ate
 C-V V-C C-V C-V
 VV connection VC connection

for a >> for [r] a
 C-V V-V C-V C-V
 VV connection VC connection

We need C-V word shapes to make VC connections!

There are 27 high-frequency words in the 100 Most Common Words in Written English list that begin with a vowel sound and are therefore often found in the second syllable of a VV connection.

24 of them are function words – with 12 in the top 40 – while only 3 are content words:

| | | | | | |
|--------|--------|---------|-----------|-----------|---------|
| 4. of | 11. it | 32. an | 45. about | 78. over | 95. any |
| 5. and | 14. on | 36. all | 62. into | 80. also | 100. us |
| 6. a | 17. as | 42. up | 70. other | 82. after | |
| 7. in | 20. at | 43. out | 75. only | 86. our | |
| 10. I | 31. or | 44. if | 77. its | 91. even | |

Note that 3 words appear twice, because they are a single vowel sound, so can be either side of the syllable pair:

a, I, our

7 other words appear in both lists because they have two syllables and start and end with a vowel sound:

after, also, any, into, only, other, over

Other common words and syllables that frequently appear in the second part of the syllable pair of a VV connection include: am, ing, is, off, ours, and own.

Common suffixes and prefixes also play their part in creating VV connections. For example:

| Followed by r: | | Followed by y: | | Followed by w: | |
|----------------|-----------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|
| schwa | | ii | | eu | |
| -a | pasta [r] is | -ary | library [y] is | -o | ago [w] and |
| -ar | sugar [r] is | -cy | fancy [y] is | -ow | below [w] a |
| -er | teacher [r] is | -ey | money [y] is | | |
| -or | doctor [r] is | -ie | movie [y] is | oo | |
| -our | colour [r] is | -ly | early [y] is | | |
| -ra | extra [r] is | -raphy | geography [y] is | -oo | shampoo [w] is |
| -ure | nature [r] is | -ry | every [y] other | -ue | value [w] a |
| iy | | -ty | twenty [y] is | | |
| | | -y | happy [y] and | | |
| -ia | media [r] is | ai | | | |
| -iar | familiar [r] as | -fy | satisfy [y] a | | |
| -ier | copier [r] is | -ify | unify [y] and | | |
| -ior | junior [r] is | | | | |

There are 23 vowel sounds in English. Here is a summary of which sounds meet **r**, **y**, and **w**:

| | | | |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------|---|--------------|
| 3 long vowel sounds: | ar er or | } | <div>r</div> |
| 5 diphthongs: | aiy auw eir iy uuw | | |
| schwa : | e.g., for, her, suffixes | | |
| 1 long vowel sound: | ee | } | <div>y</div> |
| 3 diphthongs: | ai ei oy | | |
| ii : | e.g., the /ii/, be, he, me, she, we | | |
| 1 long vowel sound: | oo | } | <div>w</div> |
| 2 diphthongs: | au eu | | |
| schwa : | to, you (weak forms) | | |

6 out of 8 short vowel sounds cannot connect to other vowel sounds, because they do not appear at the end of a syllable next to another vowel sound:

a e i o u uu

The other 2 short vowel sounds – **ii** and **schwa** – can connect, as shown above. Note: the schwa sound is the only vowel sound that can connect with two sounds: **r** ('teacher is') and **w** ('to Africa'). However, it more commonly connects with **r**.

As well as the connections below, it is a good idea to practice connections that repeat regularly.

For example:

| With r: | | With y: | | With w: | |
|-----------|-------------------------|----------|--------|---------|----------------|
| for a | f r / fr | see a | see y | to a | to w |
| for it | f rit | say a | say y | now is | now wiz |
| you're a | y r | they are | they y | so I | so wai / so w |
| there is | the riz | be a | be y | go out | go wout |
| car is | car riz | he is | he yiz | no idea | no wai diy |
| their own | their rown / th rown | we are | we y | you are | you ware / y w |

Quiz

#1. VV connections are less common than the other connections because:

- fewer words begin with a vowel sound in English.
- more words begin or end with a vowel sound in English.
- fewer words begin or end with a vowel sound in English.
- fewer words end with a vowel sound in English.

#2. Many common function words end with a vowel sound, e.g., _____. (Choose up to five.)

- a) the
- b) by
- c) buy
- d) for
- e) go
- f) you
- g) to

#3. We need words with a _____ shape following one another in order to get _____ connections.

- a) V-C, CV
- b) C-V, VC
- c) VC, C-V
- d) CV, VC

#4. Words with the suffixes -a, -er, -ure will be followed by _____ in a VV connection, while words with the suffixes -ly, -ry, -y will be followed by _____, and words with the suffixes -oo and -ue will be followed by _____.

- a) y, w, r
- b) r, w, y
- c) r, y, w
- d) y, r, w

#5. These six short vowel sounds cannot connect to other vowel sounds, because they do not appear at the end of a syllable next to another vowel sound: _____.

- a) a, o, i, o, u, uu
- b) a, e, ii, o, u, uu
- c) a, e, i, o, u, schwa
- d) a, e, i, o, u, uu

Practice

1. Spend a few minutes looking through a dictionary. Notice how English words more often begin and end with a consonant sound than with a vowel sound. Why do you think that is?*
2. Write down ten words that end with a vowel sound and ten which begin with a vowel sound. Put them into phrases and practice them out loud, adding w, y, or r. Then write ten words that both *begin* and *end* with a vowel sound and repeat the exercise.
3. Look at the list of high-frequency words that end with a vowel sound on p.147. and read them out loud. Notice that many have our preferred syllable shape: C-V.
4. Learn the three word groups on p.147, so that you know more instinctively whether to add r, y, or w after these very common high-frequency words.
5. Practice making VV phrases with these words, e.g. 'for a'. Say them out loud, then put them into short sentences and say them too, e.g. 'I went for a walk.' In this sentence, 'for a' is contracted to the monosyllabic 'fr'.
6. Practice saying the two phrases at the top of p.148 out loud. Try putting them into sentences and saying them too, e.g., 'They ate a lot of eggs.' = 'They [y]ate...'
7. Learn the list of high-frequency words on p.148. Many of these are V-C-shaped words, e.g., 'of', 'and', 'in', 'on', and 'at', which is the worst possible syllable shape to be, because we

cannot create a good VC connection with them on either side. We have to make at least two corrective actions – guaranteed!

8. Write down ten content words with a V-C syllable shape, e.g., 'old'. Put them into phrases or short sentences and practice them out loud. Notice how you have to perform at least two actions to create good connections, e.g., 'The old man.' = add y in the first VV connection, then delete d in the blend to rest on a friendly consonant sound = THE YOL MAN.
9. Focus on the three words which are made up of one single sound on p.148: 'a', 'l', and 'our'. Can you think of any more?
10. Learn the table of suffixes and which sound they connect with in VV connections (p.148). Practice saying the phrases out loud. Get used to the patterns, so that these connections become second nature for you.
11. Read p.149. Learn which English vowel sounds connect with which sound in VV connections: r, y, and w. Learn also which vowel sounds cannot connect in VV connections, i.e., the six out of eight short vowel sounds on p.149.
12. Learn the short vowel sounds on p.149 which are exceptions: ii and the schwa sound. ii connects with y (e.g., 'the [y] end') , while the schwa sound usually connects with r (e.g., 'teacher [r] ate'), but also sometimes with w (e.g., 'to [w] agree').
13. Practice and commit to memory connections that repeat regularly, e.g., the ones in the table on p.149. Practice them out loud, put them into sentences, and record yourself saying them. Get to know them. You already say them again and again every time you speak English, so it would be much better to say them correctly – with VC connections – having added r, y, or w, than as bad VV connections.

**Tip: remember that twenty-one out of twenty-six letters in the English alphabet are consonants, while only five are vowels: 'a', 'e', 'i', 'o', and 'u'.*

Unit 7.3 Practice with r

Practice: **r** is added when **ar** meets a vowel sound in a VV connection:

(VV) car is jar of far away ska info radar idea

(VV) spa accessory bra on guitar act star in bar open

ar

Practice: **r** is added when **er** meets a vowel sound in a VV connection:

(VV) Sir Edward purr and whirr about stir every fir or

(VV) occur each blur objects per annum fur of chauffeur Oliver

er

Practice: **r** is added when **or** meets a vowel sound in a VV connection:

(VV) four eggs before I saw a pour extra more awards

(VV) law office jaw ache door open core issue floor inside

or

Note that 4 out of the next 5 diphthong sounds all end with a schwa sound **uh**:

aiy, **auw**, **iy**, **uuw** (not **eir**)

Practice: **r** is added when **aiy** meets a vowel sound in a VV connection:

(VV) fire and higher income prior issue dryer in choir again

(VV) liar is tyre air via Adam dire end buyer ordered

aiy

Practice: **r** is added when **auw** meets a vowel sound in a VV connection:

(VV) flour and hour of dour individual sour or devour a

(VV) tower of power up scour every devour all flower is

auw

Practice: **r** is added when **iy** meets a vowel sound in a VV connection:

(VV) year of idea is appear at hear any cheer up

(VV) pier end earache tear up clear aim dear aunt

iy

Practice: **r** is added when **uuw** meets a vowel sound in a VV connection:

(VV) pure emotion cure all lure a ensure every secure oven

(VV) mature as endure any manure is fewer apples newer oil

uuw

Practice: **r** is added when **eir** meets a vowel sound in a VV connection:

(VV) there is where am pair of wear a stare at

(VV) they're amazing tear open bear every chair on their idea

eir

Practice: **r** is added when **uh (schwa)** meets a vowel sound in a VV connection:

uh

(VV) are an her age banana and pizza is ever after

(VV) future aim weather app polar ice doctor advises for a

More common words ending in the **schwa sound** connecting with **r**:

Function words – weak forms:

- are the whole word is a schwa: uh, e.g., are in, are open, are alone, are odd
- her her umbrella, her aim, her uncle, her own
- were were angry, were over, were always, were eaten
- for for a = f r or fr (weak forms): for a, for an, for ages, forever
- you're you're a, you're always, you're allowed, you're in

More examples of words with **schwa sound** suffixes, connecting with **r**:

- a asthma, banana, gorilla, koala, llama, pasta, pizza, samba, sauna, soda, sofa, tuba, umbrella, vanilla, viola
- ah cheetah
- ar calendar, caterpillar, collar, dollar, polar, solar, sugar, vicar
- er after, better, enter, ever, member, never, number, other, over, teacher, user

More examples of words with **schwa sound** suffixes, connecting with **r**:

- or counsellor, doctor, factor, major, minor, mirror, motor, sailor
- our favour, flavour, harbour, honour, humour, labour, neighbour, odour
- ra algebra, camera, cobra, extra, flora, mascara, opera, ultra
- re centre, fibre, genre, litre, metre, theatre
- ure creature, culture, failure, feature, future, nature, picture, pleasure, pressure

Quiz

#1. **r** is added when **ar** meets a vowel sound in a VV connection, for example: _____ and _____. (Choose two.)

- a) part of
- b) jar of
- c) car for
- d) star in

#2. **r** is added when **er** meets a vowel sound in a VV connection, for example: _____ and _____. (Choose two.)

- a) blur objects
- b) her chair
- c) there is
- d) Sir Edward

#3. Which one of these diphthong sounds does not end with a schwa sound?

- a) aiy
- b) auw
- c) eir
- d) iy
- e) uuw

#4. Which phrases show examples of a schwa sound meeting r? (Choose up to four.)

- a) happy in
- b) pizza is
- c) burgers are
- d) are open
- e) me and
- f) her aim
- g) go up
- h) nature is

#5. Which words will not connect with r in a VV connection? (Choose two.)

- a) nature
- b) doctor
- c) movie
- d) theatre
- e) extra
- f) true

Practice

1. Practice saying the phrases with ar, er, and or on p.152 out loud. Focus on adding r to create a good VC connection. Try to imagine longer sentences based around these phrases, e.g. 'I had four eggs.' Say them out loud. Make up your own similar phrases and repeat the exercises.
2. Read the following note on p.152. Make lists of words that end with the sounds aiy, auw, iy, and uuw (e.g., fire, power, here, and pure). Add a following word that begins with a vowel sound to create a VV connection. Practice them out loud, correcting the bad connection by adding r each time.
3. Practice saying the phrases with aiy, auw, iy, uuw, and eir on p.152 out loud. Focus on adding r to create a good VC connection. Try to imagine longer sentences based around these phrases, e.g. 'Jeff received a higher income than his brother.' Say them out loud. Record yourself, then slow it down and check your pronunciation – in particular the insertion of r. How did you do? Make up your own similar phrases and repeat the exercises.
4. Practice saying the phrases where uh meets a vowel sound on p.153 out loud. Focus on adding r after the schwa sound in each phrase to create a good VC connection. Try to imagine longer sentences based around these phrases, e.g. 'They lived happily ever after.' = EVER RAFTER. Say them out loud.
5. Learn all the common words that end in a schwa sound and then connect with r on p.153. Practice the phrases out loud. Think up your own similar phrases.
6. Look at the words with schwa sound suffixes, connecting with r on p.153. Choose some of the words and create phrases with VV connections, e.g., 'The gorilla entered.' = THE GORILLA RENTED. Make up similar phrases using these suffixes and repeat the exercises.

Further Study

- [The 48 Sounds of English](#)

Unit 7.4 Practice with y

Practice: **y** is added when **ee** meets a vowel sound in a VV connection:

(VV) tea at see a tree is three eggs free ad

(VV) bee and agree about knee op ski area sea edge

ee

Practice: **y** is added when **ai** meets a vowel sound in a VV connection:

(VV) by a I always sky at shy elephant cry about

(VV) try it hi Olly eye open fly away tie in

ai

Practice: **y** is added when **ei** meets a vowel sound in a VV connection:

(VV) they ate say it way out may enter spray everywhere

(VV) OK Eddie weigh in hey everybody grey owl today is

ei

Practice: **y** is added when **oy** meets a vowel sound in a VV connection:

(VV) boy ate koi accident annoy everyone corduroy is joy of

(VV) employ a cowboy app envoy award ahoy Adam toy animal

oy

Practice: **y** is added when **ii** meets a vowel sound in a VV connection:

(VV) the office she is me and twenty-eight he and

(VV) movie app happy about fairly old we ate the end

ii

More examples of words ending in **ii** which connect to the next vowel sound with **y**:

- 'the' before a vowel sound = ii + y: the ice, the olive, the end, the interview, the ocean
- Common function words: be a, me in, he is, she ate, we all
- Numbers ending in -y: twenty-eight, thirty-eight, forty-eight, fifty-eight
- Other words ending in suffix -y: happy about, geography exam, fairly old, early hour
- Rare internal VV connections: phy si o = /ii yeu/, ge o gra phy /ii Yo/

Quiz

#1. Which phrases do not connect with y? (Choose two.)

- a) three eggs
- b) I always
- c) idea is
- d) employ a (continued)

- e) grey owl
- f) law office

#2. When does the definite article 'the' have the sound *ii* and connect with *y*?

- a) When it meets a consonant sound
- b) When it meets a friendly sound
- c) When it meets a vowel sound
- d) When it meets a voiced consonant

#3. Which phrases do not connect with *y*? (Choose two.)

- a) be a
- b) you are
- c) me in
- d) we all
- e) go out
- f) he is

#4. Which words will not connect with *y* in a VV connection? (Choose two.)

- a) OK
- b) koi
- c) though
- d) the
- e) fairly
- f) via

#5. The words 'geography' and 'physio' are interesting because they: _____

- a) have rare internal CC connections
- b) have rare internal VV connections
- c) have rare external VV connections
- d) have rare internal VC connections

Discussion

1. How aware are you of the short *ii* sound in English? Did you know that it has an importance in English pronunciation as one of the three sounds – along with the schwa and very short *i* – that are commonly found in weak syllables? It is often found in the suffix at the end of a word – e.g., '-ly' in 'lovely'. How many words ending in this sound can you think of, off the top of your head?

Practice

1. Practice saying the phrases with *ee*, *ai*, *ei*, *oy*, and *ii* on p.155 out loud. Focus on adding *y* to create good VC connections. Try to imagine longer sentences based around these phrases, e.g. 'We had tea at four.' = TEA Y_ FOUR. (In the weak form of 'at', the *a* becomes a schwa sound and *t* is deleted and replaced by a glottal stop. Of course, 'at' is a V-C syllable-shaped word, so we have to take action on both sides – adding *y*, deleting *t*, and adding a glottal stop.) Say them out loud. Make up your own similar phrases and repeat the exercises.
2. Focus on each sound after which *y* is added: *ee*, *ai*, *ei*, *oy*, and *ii*. Make up your own phrases with words or syllables ending with each sound and meeting a vowel sound. Practice them out loud. Add them into longer phrases or sentences. Record yourself, slow it down, and check how you pronounced each connection. Are some of the sounds easier than others to pronounce, or are they all the same to you?

3. Learn the examples of words that end with *ii* on p.155. Practice the phrases out loud. Make up your own phrases and sentences.

Further Study

- [The 48 Sounds of English](#)

Unit 7.5 Practice with w

Practice: **w** is added when **oo** meets a vowel sound in a VV connection:

(VV) two eggs new idea do every who is too easy

(VV) blue ink few of through a crew of due in

oo

Practice: **w** is added when **au** meets a vowel sound in a VV connection:

(VV) now it bow and allow us how are vow all

(VV) brow of cow ate avow every wow a bough of

au

Practice: **w** is added when **eu** meets a vowel sound in a VV connection:

(VV) go out so is no eggs grow a blow on

(VV) show up below us though everyone know Adam throw it

eu

Practice: **w** is added when **uh (schwa)** meets a vowel sound in a VV connection, i.e., with the **weak forms** of 'to' and 'you':

(VV) to a you are to English you always to enjoy

(VV) to include you and to open you organise into every

uh

This includes:

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| • to + verb | e.g., to arrive, to enjoy, to include, to order |
| • to + article | e.g., to a, to an |
| • to + place | e.g., to Africa, to Australia, to India, to Ireland |
| • into | e.g., into a, into every, into our, into an |
| • you | e.g., you always, you ask, you eat, you ought to |

Quiz

#1. _____ is added when **oo** meets a _____ sound in a _____ connection.

- a) w, consonant, VV
- b) y, vowel, VV
- c) w, vowel, VV
- d) w, vowel, VC

#2. Which phrase does not show an example of **au** connecting with **w** in a VV connection?

- a) allow us
- b) cow ate
- c) now it
- d) the end

#3. Which words will not connect with *w* in a VV connection? (Choose up to three.)

- a) me
- b) to
- c) be
- d) go
- e) no
- f) their

#4. Which phrase does not show an example of *eu* connecting with *w* in a VV connection?

- a) grow a
- b) through a
- c) below us
- d) go out

#5. The weak forms of 'to' and 'you' end with a schwa sound which connects with *w* in which phrases? (Choose two.)

- a) to a
- b) you must
- c) to go
- d) you and

Practice

1. Practice saying the phrases with *oo*, *au*, and *eu* on p.158 out loud. Focus on adding *w* to create good VC connections. Try to imagine longer sentences based around these phrases, e.g. 'We ate two eggs for breakfast.' = TWO WEGGS. Say them out loud. Make up your own similar phrases and repeat the exercises. Record yourself saying them, slow down the recording and check your pronunciation. How did you do?
2. Focus on each sound after which *w* is added: *oo*, *au*, and *eu*. Make up your own phrases with words or syllables ending with each sound and meeting a vowel sound. Practice them out loud. Add them into longer phrases or sentences. Ask a partner or teacher to listen to you and check how well you are doing. Are some of the sounds easier than others, or are they all the same to you?
3. Practice the phrases on p.158 with a schwa sound meeting *w* in a VV connection out loud. Improvise longer phrases or sentences around them.
4. Learn the point that after a schwa sound we usually hear *r* in VV connections, but with the (very common) function words 'to', 'into', and 'you' in their weak forms (with a schwa) we need to use *w* in VV connections. Practice the phrases on p.158, then try making up your own phrases. Say them out loud.

Further Study

- [The 48 Sounds of English](#)

Lesson 8:

Multiple Actions

Unit 8.1 Introduction

As we have seen during this course, we need to do different actions in **bad** connections to get a VC or friendly consonant connection.

The actions are: **move forward**, **delete**, **add** and **change**.

We have to do them quickly in every sentence that we say.

For example:

| | | |
|-----------|---|---------------------------|
| train at | we move forward n to leave a VC connection: | tra i na t |
| hard time | we delete d when it meets t, to leave a VC connection: | ha r ti m e |
| bound to | we delete d in a blend to leave a friendly connection: | bou n to |
| go out | we add w in a VV connection to leave a VC connection: | go w out |

These are single actions and form most of the actions that we do in connected speech.

While in **VV connections** there is always only one action to fix the problem – adding a consonant sound **w**, **y**, or **r** – in CV and CC connections we may need to use **multiple actions**.

CV connections are fairly straightforward. We move forward the consonant sound, which hopefully leaves a VC or friendly connection:

eat **a** we move forward t to leave a VC connection: ea **t**a

lamp **i**s we move forward p to leave a friendly connection: lam **p**is

If there is still a consonant sound remaining, we move forward again to get a VC connection:

gift **i**s >> gif **t**is >> gi **f**tis

This is relatively rare, and the middle connection is now CC, not CV.

So, multiple actions are necessary from time to time, but mainly in CC connections.

As we will see, the number of actions can be as many as **five**.

The principle remains the same: we need to get a **VC** or **friendly connection** between every syllable that we say.

We cannot leave a connection non-VC or friendly, no matter how many consonant sounds gather at the end of the syllable.

We will battle through them to get to the necessary **vowel** or **friendly consonant sound** that makes a **good** connection.

For example, in the following CC connection we have to **move forward** a consonant sound, **change** it to unvoiced, **delete** a consonant sound, then **move forward** again:

| | |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| | 'facts were' |
| 1. mf z | fact z were |
| 2. z changes to s | fact s were |

3. delete t in CC

fac swere

4. mf k

fa cswere

We get to the all-important vowel sound **a** in **four** actions, although as we speak naturally, we jump straight to the good connection, without uttering any of the interim stages.

We know how to do this from our long experience of English:

‘The facts were very clear...’

Nothing gets in the way of the VC or friendly connection. The most important sounds in the sentence are the stressed vowel sounds – the sound spine ([Lesson 1](#)). The **sound spine** must be predominant.

Consonant sounds are happily **sacrificed** in order to get to a clearer sound spine.

When using multiple actions, we simply do what we normally do, but combine the actions: **move forward**, **delete**, and **add** consonant sounds, and **change** voiced consonant sounds into unvoiced.

These four actions that we began with are all we have. There are no amazing new actions to bring out in the final lesson of this course!

Quiz

#1. True or false? Most of the time we use single actions to create good sound connections between syllables.

- a) True
- b) False

#2. If we move forward a consonant sound and there is still a bad connection, we may be able to _____.

- a) leave it
- b) move forward again
- c) delete the previous friendly consonant sound
- d) add a consonant sound

#3. Our goal is to have _____ in every sound connection.

- a) a VC connection
- b) a bad connection
- c) a VC or friendly connection
- d) a friendly connection

#4. Consonant sounds can be easily _____ in order to get a clearer sound spine.

- a) sacrificed
- b) added
- c) preserved
- d) emphasised

#5. True or false? As well as the four actions we have used during this course, there are plenty more remarkable actions in connected speech.

- a) True
- b) False

Discussion

1. As we draw nearer to the end of the course, how has your understanding of and use of connected speech improved since the beginning?
2. How do you feel about your mastery of the four actions of connected speech – moving forward, deleting, adding, and changing consonant sounds? a) Very confident, b) Getting the hang of them, c) Having problems. Why? How do you plan to improve, if necessary?

Practice

1. Give examples of when we move forward, delete, add, and change consonant sounds in spoken English. Practice your phrases out loud.
2. Practice the phrases at the top of p.161, moving from bad connection to good connection. Does the good connection feel easier to you?
3. Give examples of changing bad VV connections into good connections using w, y, and r.
4. Practice the phrases 'eat a' and 'lamp is' on p.161, moving from bad connection to good connection. How does making the connections feel to you?
5. Practice the process of moving forward twice in the phrase 'gift is' on p.161 out loud. Put it into a short sentence, e.g., 'The gift is very nice.' Focus on finding the vowel sound in 'gift' and moving the rest of the word forward.
6. Look at the phrase 'facts were' on p.161. Practice the process of changing 'facts were' from a CC connection to a VC connection, i.e. resting on the vowel sound a of 'facts' and deleting or moving forward the rest of the word. Notice again that t causes a problem and has to be deleted.
7. Write a short sentence and identify the stressed syllables and the vowel sound on each one. This is the sound spine. Explain how you would emphasise the sound spine by using connected speech: moving forward, deleting, adding, and changing consonant sounds.

Further Study

- [The Sound Spine](#)

Unit 8.2 Why multiple actions?

Why do we need **multiple actions**?

The problem which forces us to use multiple actions is simple: **too many consonant sounds gathering** at the end of the first syllable in a pair, making it harder to get to the necessary vowel sound or friendly consonant sound that makes a **good** connection.

What causes multiple consonant sounds to gather at the end of the first syllable? In general: **consonant blends** and the letter 's', which is usually pronounced z. ([Lesson 4](#).)

Consonant blends like nd in 'friend', followed by 's', create a 3-letter consonant blend: 'nds' – pronounced ndz – which is difficult to pronounce – especially next to a following consonant sound, e.g. 'friends that...' = friendz that.

This is unhelpful for us, because it is harder to get to the friendly consonant sound n, which is necessary to make a good connection.

The cause for the prevalence of z at the end of the first syllable ([Lesson 4](#)) can be summarised as follows:

1. Apart from **common words** ending in z, this is caused by the word being **plural**, in a **contraction** (with 'is' or 'has'), **possessive 's'**, or **s form** in present simple:

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| the friends were | 's' is plural |
| her friend's quite nice | 's' is in a contraction with 'is' ('friend is') |
| her friend's gone | 's' is in a contraction with 'has' ('friend has') |
| her friend's book was | 's' shows possession |
| he befriends them | 's' is s form in present simple |

2. **Blend + 's'** gives us multiple consonant sounds at the end of a syllable, which have to be dealt with by **multiple actions**. For example:

| | | | |
|-------------------------|---|---|------------------|
| the friends were | } | <div>1. mf z</div> <div>2. change z to s</div> <div>3. del d in a blend</div> <div>4. rest on n</div> | the frien swere |
| her friend's quite nice | } | | her frien squite |
| her friend's gone | } | | her frien sgone |
| her friend's book was | } | | her frien sbook |
| he befriends them | } | | he befrien sthem |

With **blends** we will look at three different situations:

1. blends **with** a friendly consonant sound – with and without 's'
2. blends **without** a friendly consonant sound – with and without 's'
3. blends caused by **regular verbs** ending in '-ed'

But let's back up a bit and start with **sound connections** which don't need *any* actions.

0 Actions:

VC and **friendly connections** are already **good** – no action required!

1 Action:

These are the actions we mentioned in [Unit 8.1](#):

| | | |
|-----------|---|------------|
| train at | we move forward n to leave a VC connection: | tra i nat |
| hard time | we delete d when it meets t, to leave a VC connection: | har t time |
| bound to | we delete d in a blend to leave a friendly connection: | boun to |
| go out | we add w in a VV connection to leave a VC connection: | go wout |

These are single actions and form most of the actions that we do in connected speech.

2+ Actions:

These are actions that we have studied in Lessons 3-7. They are not based on **blend + 's'**.

For example:

| | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|-------------|
| track's s been | mf z, change to s, mf k | tra cksbeen |
| get the | del t, add glottal stop | ge_ the |
| last night | del t, mf s | la snight |
| must send | del t, del s (duplicate) | mu send |
| get him | del h, mf t | ge tim |
| see him * | del h, add y | see yim |

**Although this is a good VC connection, we often delete h from the beginning of 'him', 'her', 'his' in fast speech to get an easier to pronounce VC connection ([Lesson 6](#)).*

Note that we are dealing with mainly **unvoiced** consonant sounds – f, k, p, s, t, tt – which **move forward** without changing. **Voiced** consonant sounds change to unvoiced in CC connections. For example, v changes to f in the phrase 'have some': ha fsome, and z changes to s in 'likes them': lai ksthm.

In addition, note that the actions we use are the same as always. We follow the patterns as discussed in previous lessons:

- **move forward** (most of the actions)
- **delete** t, d, h, and duplicate sounds, when necessary
- **add** w, y, and r in VV connections, when necessary
- **add** glottal stops. We add a glottal stop when t is deleted next to a vowel sound or friendly consonant sound. In other words, when we can no longer move forward or delete another consonant sound
- **change** voiced consonant sounds to unvoiced, when necessary

Quiz

#1. Why do we sometimes need to use multiple actions to get a good connection?

- a) because too many consonant sounds gather at the end of the first syllable in a pair
- b) because not enough consonant sounds gather at the end of the first syllable in a pair
- c) because too many consonant sounds gather at the beginning of the second syllable in a pair
- d) because too many vowel sounds gather at the end of the first syllable in a pair

#2. What normally causes multiple consonant sounds to gather at the end of the first syllable?

- a) consonant blends and friendly consonant sounds
- b) consonant blends and the letter 'w'
- c) there is no particular reason
- d) consonant blends and the letter 's'

#3. _____ at the end of a syllable prevent us from getting to the _____ or _____ that we need to make a good _____.

- a) Consonants, friendly consonant sound, connection, vowel sound
- b) Consonants, vowel sound, friendly consonant sound, connection
- c) vowel sound, Consonants, connection, friendly consonant sound
- d) Vowels, consonant sound, friendly consonant sound, connection

#4. The letter 's' is usually pronounced as z; for example, when the following conditions apply: (Choose up to four.)

- a) when 's' is a capital letter
- b) when 's' is plural
- c) when 's' is in a contraction
- d) when 's' meets another consonant sound
- e) when 's' shows possession
- f) when 's' is s form in present simple

#5. In the phrase 'must send' we use _____ actions to get a good connection.

- a) one
- b) two
- c) three
- d) four

Practice

1. Look at the [Common Consonant Blends in English](#) worksheet. Learn the final consonant blends with 'ld' and 'nd'.
2. Consonant blends like nd in 'friend', followed by 's', are unhelpful for us because they create a consonant blend: 'ds', that we have to remove before the friendly consonant sound n can be at the end of the syllable, which we require for a good connection. Write five more words with 3-letter consonant blends, put them into phrases, practice saying them out loud, and focus on the actions of connected speech.
3. Look at the five phrases with 'friends' on p.164. Memorise the main reasons for the letter 's' being pronounced as z at the end of a syllable: plural, contraction, possessive 's', or s form in present simple.
4. Practice the phrases out loud once again, going from bad connection to good connection. Record yourself, slow it down, and then listen back. Check that you make the four necessary actions. How did you do?
5. Write five phrases with VC connections and five with friendly connections. Notice that no actions are necessary. Try to write longer phrases or sentences with only good VC or friendly connections and practice them out loud. How many good connections can you get before you have to use a bad connection?

6. Practice the four phrases beginning with 'train at' on p.165, moving from bad connection to good connection. How do the actions feel to you? Do you agree that they sound... a) better in English, b) more like how a native speaker talks, c) strange and unnatural to your ears? Why?
7. Practice the phrases beginning with 'track's been' on p.165, moving from bad connection to good connection. Write down the interim stages of each transition, e.g., 'last night' >> 'las night' >> 'la snight'. Practice saying them out loud, then practice them in your own sentences, trying to get the final stage first time.
8. Read the note about unvoiced consonant sounds on p.165. Write 10 phrases with words ending in unvoiced consonant sounds f, k, p, s, t, and tt meeting consonant sounds in CC connections. Each sound has to move forward without changing. Practice the phrases out loud, then put them into short sentences and say them. Ask a partner or your teacher to check your pronunciation.
9. Learn the information about the actions that we use at the bottom of p.165, and make sure that you understand it. These are the actions we use to achieve fluency in connected speech.

Further Study

- [Common Consonant Blends in English](#)
- [Practice Final Consonant Blends](#)

Unit 8.3 Blends with a friendly consonant sound – without 's'

Let's look at **consonant blends** which include a friendly consonant sound, but without 's'. These blends require 1 or 2 actions.


For example: 'hold on' (1 action)

Goal: nearest **vowel** or **friendly consonant sound**:

Problem – CV connection:

ho | d CV on

Action 1 – Move forward d:

ho | d CV on


Result – We can rest on friendly consonant sound l:

ho | F don

Blends with friendly consonant sound l [no 's']

l

| | ACTIONS: | 1 | 2 | 3 | Result: |
|----|-----------------|----------|-------------|----------|----------------|
| CV | hold on | mf d | | | hol don |
| CC | hold me | del d | | | hol me |
| CV | gulf of | mf f | | | gul fof |
| CC | gulf can | mf f | | | gul fcan |
| CV | silk is | mf k | | | sil kis |
| CC | silk which | mf k | | | sil kwich |
| CV | help it | mf p | | | hel pit |
| CC | help me | mf p | | | hel pme |
| CV | belt is | mf t | | | bel tis |
| CC | belt was | del t | add GS | | bel_ was |
| CV | valve is | mf v | | | val vis |
| CC | valve was | mf v | change to f | | val fwass |

Here is an example with friendly consonant sound m:


For example: 'jump with' (1 action)

Goal: nearest vowel or friendly consonant sound

Problem – CC connection:

ju m p CC with

Action 1: move forward p:

ju m p CC with


Result – We can rest on friendly consonant sound m:

ju m F pwith

Blends with friendly consonant sounds m, n, ng [no 's']

| | ACTIONS: | 1 | 2 | 3 | Result: |
|----|----------------|-------|--------|---|------------|
| m | CV jump in | mf p | | | jum pin |
| | CC jump with | mf p | | | jum pwith |
| | CV attempt a | mf t | mf p | | attem pta |
| | CC attempt the | del t | mf p | | attem pthe |
| n | CV ground is | mf d | | | groun dis |
| | CC ground was | del d | | | groun was |
| | CV plant is | mf t | | | plan tis |
| | CC plant was | del t | add GS | | plan_ was |
| | CV month is | mf tt | | | mon this |
| | CC month was | mf tt | | | mon thwas |
| ng | CV bank is | mf k | | | bang kis |
| | CC bank was | mf k | | | bang kwas |

Summary of actions:

- In each connection we can rest on the friendly consonant sound
- The most common action in both CV and CC connections is to move forward a consonant sound: hold on > hol don
- If d is part of a blend in a CC connection, we delete it: hold me > hol me

- If t is at the end of the first syllable in a CC connection, we delete it and usually add a glottal stop: **belt was > bel_ was**
- However, if there is another consonant sound to move forward, we don't need to add a glottal stop: **attempt the > attemp the > attem pthe**
- If a voiced consonant moves forward in a CC connection, it changes to unvoiced: **valve was > val fwas**

Quiz

- #1. To correct the problem in 'hold on' we _____ d then _____ a friendly consonant sound.
- delete, rest on
 - move forward, delete
 - move forward, rest on
 - add, rest on
- #2. In the phrase 'jump with' we move forward the unvoiced consonant sound p because it is _____ to pronounce at the _____ of a syllable than at the _____.
- more difficult, beginning, end
 - easier, beginning, end
 - easier, end, beginning
 - harder, end, middle
- #3. In the phrase 'ground was', we _____ the d, rather than moving it forward, because it is in a _____.
- delete, phrase
 - move forward, blend
 - add, blend
 - delete, blend
- #4. True or false? If we delete the t at the end of the first word in this phrase, we need to add a glottal stop: 'attempt the'.
- True
 - False
- #5. The most common action in both CV and CC connections is to _____ a _____.
- move forward, vowel sound
 - move forward, consonant sound
 - delete, consonant sound
 - pronounce, consonant sound

Practice

1. Practice following and saying out loud the transition with 'hold on' on p.168. Say each stage out loud. Finally, rest on the friendly consonant sound l. Make sure you understand what is happening and why. [Listen to the recording on the online course page](#) if you have any doubts.
2. Practice saying the phrases in the table on p.168 out loud, going from bad connection to good. Notice the actions and practice the interim stages. Practice resting on the friendly consonant sound l in each phrase. When do we move forward and when do we delete? Add the phrases to your own sentences; practice them out loud. Record them, slow them down,

and listen to your sound connections – then get a partner or teacher to check your pronunciation.

3. Practice following and saying out loud the transition with 'jump with' on p.169. Say each stage out loud. Finally, rest on the friendly consonant sound m. Make sure you understand what is happening and why. [Listen to the recording](#) if you have any doubts.
4. Practice saying the phrases in the table on p.169 out loud, going from bad connection to good. Notice the actions. Practice resting on the friendly consonant sounds m, n, and ng in each phrase. When do we move forward and when do we delete?
5. Focus on the summary of actions on pp.169-170. Make sure that you understand these important rules. Learn the facts of connected speech so well that you remember them and implement them while you are speaking – even without thinking about them. For example, 'If d is part of a blend in a CC connection, we delete it' and 'If t is at the end of the first syllable in a CC connection, we delete it and usually add a glottal stop'.

Unit 8.4 Blends with a friendly consonant sound – with 's'

Now let's look at blends which include a friendly consonant sound, with 's' at the end. These blends require 2-4 actions.

For example: 'helps it' (2 actions)

Goal: nearest vowel or friendly consonant sound

Problem – CV connection:

he l p s CV it

Action 1: move forward z (the sound made by the letter 's' here)

he l p s CV it
↓

Problem – CC connection:

he l p CC zit

Action 2: move forward p:

he l p CC zit
↓

Result – We can rest on friendly consonant sound l:

he l F pzit

Blends with friendly consonant sound l [+ 's']

| | ACTIONS: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Result: |
|----|-------------|------|-------------|-------------|-------------|------------|
| CV | holds on | mf z | del d | | | hol zon |
| CC | holds me | mf z | change to s | del d | | hol sme |
| CV | gulfs of | mf z | mf f | | | gul fzof |
| CC | gulfs can | mf z | change to s | mf f | | gul fscan |
| CV | silks are | mf z | mf k | | | sil kzare |
| CC | silks which | mf z | change to s | mf k | | sil kswich |
| CV | helps it | mf z | mf p | | | hel pzit |
| CC | helps me | mf z | change to s | mf p | | hel psme |
| CV | belts are | mf z | del t | add GS | | bel_zare |
| CC | belts were | mf z | change to s | del t | add GS | bel_swere |
| CV | valves are | mf z | mf v | change to f | | val fzare |
| CC | valves were | mf z | change to s | mf v | change to f | val fswere |

Here is an example with friendly consonant sound n:

For example: 'plants were' (4 actions)

Goal: nearest vowel or friendly consonant sound

Problem – CC connection:

pla n t s CC were

Action 1: move forward z:

pla n t s CC were

Problem – CC connection:

pla n t CC zwere

Action 2: voiced consonant z changes to unvoiced consonant s in a CC connection:

pla n t CC swere

Problem – CC connection.

Action 3: delete t in a CC connection:

pla n F swere

Problem: glottal stop is required because t was deleted next to a friendly consonant sound.

Action 4: add a glottal stop:

pla n_ F swere

Result – We can rest on friendly consonant sound n.

Blends with friendly consonant sounds m, n, ng [+ 's']

| | ACTIONS: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Result: |
|----|-----------------|------|-------------|--------|--------|-------------|
| m | CV jumps in | mf z | mf p | | | jum pzin |
| | CC jumps with | mf z | change to s | mf p | | jum pswith |
| | CV attempts a | mf z | del t | mf p | | attem pza |
| | CC attempts the | mf z | change to s | del t | mf p | attem psthe |
| n | CV grounds are | mf z | del d | | | groun zare |
| | CC grounds were | mf z | change to s | del d | | groun swere |
| | CV plants are | mf z | del t | add GS | | plan_ zare |
| | CC plants were | mf z | change to s | del t | add GS | plan_ swere |
| | CV months are | mf z | mf tt | | | mon thzare |
| | CC months were | mf z | change to s | mf tt | | mon thswere |
| ng | CV banks are | mf z | mf k | | | bang kzare |
| | CC banks were | mf z | change to s | mf k | | bang kswere |

Summary of actions:

- In each connection we can rest on the friendly consonant sound
- The first action in each connection is to move forward z
- The most common solution in both CV and CC connections is to move forward two consonant sounds: gulfs of > gul fzof
- If d is part of a blend in a CC connection, we delete it: grounds were > groun swere
- If t is at the end of the first syllable in a CC connection, we delete it and add a glottal stop, if there is no sound remaining to move forward: belts were > bel_ swere
- However, if there is another consonant sound to move forward, e.g., p, we don't need to add a glottal stop: attempts the becomes attem psthe after 4 actions (above)
- If a voiced consonant moves forward in a CC connection, it changes to unvoiced: valves were becomes val fswere after 4 actions (p.173). Note that this does not happen very often, because, with the exception of d, we usually find unvoiced consonant sounds at the end of a syllable in blends, like:

f, k, p, s, t, and tt

(See [Common Consonant Blends in English](#).)

Quiz

#1. To get a good connection in the phrase 'helps it', we need to _____ two consonant sounds: _____ and _____.

- a) move forward, s, p
- b) delete, z, p
- c) add, z, p
- d) move forward, z, p

#2. To correct the problem in 'belts were', we need to: _____.

- a) move forward s, change to z, delete t, and add a glottal stop
- b) move forward z, change to s, delete t, and add a glottal stop
- c) move forward z, change to s, delete t, and add w, y, or r
- d) move forward z, change to t, delete t, and add a glottal stop

#3. The first action in each connection is to move forward _____.

- a) t
- b) s
- c) z
- d) d

#4. In the CV connection 'months are', we are _____ actions away from the friendly consonant sound, while in the CC connection 'months were' we are _____ actions away.

- a) two, three
- b) three, two
- c) two, four
- d) three, four

#5. We usually find _____ consonant sounds at the end of a syllable in blends.

- a) voiced
- b) unvoiced
- c) weak
- d) friendly

Practice

1. Practice following and saying out loud the transition with 'helps it' on p.172. Say each stage out loud. Finally, rest on the friendly consonant sound l. Make sure you understand what is happening and why. [Listen to the recording on the online course page](#) if you have any doubts.
2. Practice saying the phrases in the table on p.173 out loud, going from bad connection to good. Notice the actions and practice the interim stages. Pay attention to when z changes to s (in CC connections), and when it remains as z (in CV connections). Practice resting on the friendly consonant sound l in each phrase. When do we move forward and when do we delete? Add the phrases to your own sentences; practice them out loud. Record them, slow them down, and listen to your sound connections – then get a partner or teacher to check your pronunciation.
3. Practice following and saying out loud the transition with 'plants were' on pp.173-174. Say each stage out loud. Finally, rest on the friendly consonant sound n followed by a glottal stop. Make sure you understand what is happening and why. [Listen to the recording](#), if you have any doubts.

4. Practice saying the phrases in the table on p.174 out loud, going from bad connection to good. Notice the actions and practice the interim stages. Practice resting on the friendly consonant sounds m, n, and ng in each phrase. When do we move forward and when do we delete?
5. Focus on the summary of actions on p.174. Make sure that you understand these important rules. Again, learn the facts of connected speech so well that you remember them and are able to implement them naturally – and, ultimately, unconsciously – while you are speaking.
6. Practice ‘frontloading’ consonant sounds onto the beginning of syllables, as in the phrases: ‘bang kswere’ (3 consonant sounds together) and ‘attem pshe’ (3 consonant sounds together). How easy do you find this? Is there anything equivalent in your L1? Write five of your own phrases which ‘frontload’ three or more consonant sounds onto the next syllable. Remember that however hard – or just plain eccentric – this may seem to you, it is much, much easier for native speakers of English to make a VC or friendly connection while frontloading multiple consonant sounds, than to pronounce a CV or CC connection.

Unit 8.5 Blends without a friendly consonant sound – without 's'

In this unit we will look at blends which **do not include a friendly consonant sound** and are without 's'. These blends require 2-3 actions.

For example: 'text is' (3 actions)


Goal: nearest **vowel** or **friendly consonant sound**

Problem – CV connection:

te k s † CV is

(Remember – the consonant sounds of 'x' are k and s)


Action 1: move forward t:

te k s † CV is


Problem – CC connection:

te k s CC † is

Action 2: move forward s:

te k s CC † is


Problem - CC connection:

te k CC † stis

Action 3: move forward k:

te k CC † stis


Result: VC connection:

te VC kstis

Blends with no friendly consonant sounds [no s]

| | ACTIONS: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Result: |
|----|-----------|-------|------|------|---|-----------|
| CV | gift is | mf t | mf f | | | gi ftis |
| CC | gift was | del t | mf f | | | gi fwas |
| CV | fact is | mf t | mf k | | | fa ctis |
| CC | fact was | del t | mf k | | | fa kwas |
| CV | text* is | mf t | mf s | mf k | | te kstis |
| CC | text was | del t | mf s | mf k | | te kswas |
| CV | adapt a | mf t | mf p | | | a da pta |
| CC | adapt the | del t | mf p | | | a da pthe |
| CV | desk is | mf k | mf s | | | de skis |
| CC | desk was | mf k | mf s | | | de skwas |
| CV | crisp is | mf p | mf s | | | cri spis |
| CC | crisp was | mf p | mf s | | | cri spwas |
| CV | last is | mf t | mf s | | | la stis |
| CC | last was | del t | mf s | | | la swas |
| | [*te kst] | | | | | |

Summary of actions:

- The most common action in both CV and CC connections is to move forward two consonant sounds: gift is > gi ftis
- If t is at the end of the first syllable in a CC connection, we delete it, but do not need to add a glottal stop because another consonant sound will move forward: gift was > gi fwas
- Reminder: it is much easier for native speakers of English to pronounce several consonants at the beginning of a syllable than at the end, for example: text was > te kswas

Quiz

#1. The letter 'x' usually represents two consonant sounds: _____ and _____.

- x, y
- c, s
- k, z
- k, s

#2. In the phrases 'desk is' and 'desk was' we _____ twice to get good _____ connections.

- move forward, VC
- move forward, friendly
- delete, VC
- move forward, VV

#3. True or false? It is much easier for a native speaker to say 'te kswas' than 'text was'.

- True
- False

#4. By moving forward the hard consonant sounds t and k we change 'fact is' to 'fa ctis' – thereby emphasising the _____ in the _____.

- a) consonant sound, sound spine
- b) vowel sound, sound spine
- c) vowel sound, word 'is'
- d) word, sound spine

#5. What are the steps for changing 'last was' from a bad CC connection into a good VC connection?

- a) delete t then move forward a
- b) delete s then move forward t
- c) delete t then move forward s
- d) delete t then add s

Practice

1. Practice following and saying out loud the transition with 'text is' on pp.177-178. Say each stage out loud. Make sure you understand what is happening and why. [Listen to the recording on the online course page](#) if you have any doubts.
2. Practice saying the phrases in the table on p.178 out loud, going from bad connection to good. Notice the actions and practice the interim stages. When do we move forward and when do we delete? Note that in this table we move forward thirty times, but delete only five times. Add the phrases to your own sentences; practice them out loud. Record them, slow them down, and listen to your sound connections – then get a partner or teacher to check your pronunciation. How did you do?
3. Focus on the summary of actions on p.178. Make sure that you understand these important rules. Learn the facts of connected speech so well that you remember them and are able to implement them naturally – and, ultimately, without thinking about them – while you are speaking.

Unit 8.6 Blends without a friendly consonant sound – with 's'

Let's look at blends which do not include a friendly consonant sound but do have 's' at the end. These blends require 3-5 actions.


For example: 'lasts for' (4 actions)

Goal: nearest vowel or friendly consonant sound

Problem – CC connection:

la s t s CC for

Action 1: move forward z:

la s t s CC for


Result:

la s t CC zfor

Action 2: voiced consonant z changes to unvoiced consonant s in a CC connection:

la s t CC sfor

Problem – CC connection.

Action 3: delete t in a CC connection:

la s CC sfor

Problem – CC connection with duplicate s sounds.

Action 4: delete the first s. Result: VC connection:

la VC sfor

Blends with no friendly consonant sounds [+ 's']

| | ACTIONS: | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Result: |
|----|-------------|------|-------------|------------------------|-------------------|------|-------------|
| CV | gifts are | mf z | del t | mf f | | | gi fzare |
| CC | gifts were | mf z | change to s | del t | mf f | | gi fswere |
| CV | facts are | mf z | del t | mf k | | | fa kzare |
| CC | facts were | mf z | change to s | del t | mf k | | fa kswere |
| CV | texts* are | mf z | del t | del s (near duplicate) | mf k | | te kzare |
| CC | texts* were | mf z | change to s | del t | del s (duplicate) | mf k | te kswere |
| CV | adapts a | mf z | del t | mf p | | | a da pza |
| CC | adapts the | mf z | change to s | del t | mf p | | a da psthe |
| CV | desks are | mf z | mf k | mf s | | | de skzare |
| CC | desks were | mf z | change to s | mf k | mf s | | de skswere |
| CV | crisps are | mf z | mf p | mf s | | | cri spzare |
| CC | crisps were | mf z | change to s | mf p | mf s | | cri spswere |
| CV | lasts about | mf z | del t | del s (near duplicate) | | | la zabout |
| CC | lasts for | mf z | change to s | del t | del s (duplicate) | | la sfor |
| | [*te ksts] | | | | | | |

Summary of actions:

- The first action in each connection is to move forward z
- A common action in both CV and CC connections is to move forward three consonant sounds: **desks are** becomes **de skzare** after 3 actions (see above)
- If t appears, we delete it and continue moving forward without adding a glottal stop
- Reminder: it is much easier for native speakers of English to pronounce several consonants at the beginning of a syllable than at the end – even FOUR consonant sounds. For example: **crisps were** > cri **SPSWere**
- If there is a duplicate sound at the end of the first syllable, delete it:
lasts for > last zfor > last sfor > las sfor > la sfor

Quiz

#1. Blends without a friendly consonant sound, but with 's', may require as many as _____ actions to correct.

- two
- three
- four
- five

#2. To correct 'lasts for', the first action is _____, the second action is _____, the third action is _____, and the final action is _____ because it is a _____ sound.

- change z to s, delete t, move forward z, delete s, duplicate
- move forward z, change z to s, delete t, delete s, duplicate
- move forward z, change z to s, delete s, duplicate, delete t
- change z to s, move forward z, delete t, delete s, duplicate

#3. The words 'gifts', 'facts', 'desks', and 'lasts' all have _____ consonant sounds blocking the vowel from the end of the syllable, while 'texts' has _____.

- a) three, four
- b) three, two
- c) two, four
- d) two, three

#4. Why do we delete the t in five of the seven phrases?

- a) Because native speakers do not like the letter 't'
- b) Because it is difficult to pronounce t next to another vowel sound
- c) Because it is easy to pronounce t next to another consonant sound
- d) Because it is difficult to pronounce t next to another consonant sound

#5. Why do we move forward three sounds – z, p, and s – in the sound connection 'crisps are'?

- a) Because we want a VC connection to make the phrase more interesting
- b) Because we want a VC connection to make the phrase easier to pronounce
- c) Because we want a CV connection to make the phrase easier to pronounce
- d) Because we enjoy moving forward consonant sounds when we speak

Practice

1. Practice following and saying out loud the transition with 'lasts for' on p.180. Say each stage out loud. Make sure you understand what is happening and why. [Listen to the recording on the online course page](#) if you have any doubts.
2. Practice saying the phrases in the table on p.181 out loud, going from bad connection to good. Notice the actions and practice the interim stages. When does z change to s – and why? When do we delete t – and why? Notice how often we perform each action: moving forward (58%), deleting (28%), changing (14%), adding (0%). Add the phrases to your own sentences; practice them out loud. Record them, slow them down, and listen to your sound connections – then get a partner or teacher to check your pronunciation.
3. Focus on the summary of actions on p.181. Make sure that you understand these important rules. Learn the facts of connected speech so well that you remember them and are able to implement them naturally, and – after practice – unconsciously, while you are speaking.
4. Look again at the phrases in the table on p.181. Practice 'frontloading' consonant sounds onto the beginning of syllables, as in the phrases: 'de skswere' (4 consonant sounds) and 'cri spswere' (4 consonant sounds). How easy do you find this? Is there anything equivalent in your L1? Write five of your own phrases which 'frontload' three or more consonant sounds onto the next syllable. Remember that however hard – or just plain eccentric – this may seem to you, it is far easier for native speakers of English to make a VC or friendly connection while frontloading multiple consonant sounds, than to pronounce a CV or CC connection.

Unit 8.7 Blends caused by regular verbs ending in '-ed'

Finally, let's look at blends which are caused by **regular verbs** ending in **'-ed'**. These blends require 2-3 actions. Note: it is impossible to add the letter 's' at the end of these words, for example: **'askeds'** and **'passeds'**.

For example: 'moved it' (2 actions)

*[Note: we do not include regular verbs ending with 't' or 'd' here, because their endings have an extra syllable with a schwa sound, rather than forming blends. For example: 'ad**ded**' – it is impossible for us to blend 'd' with 'd'. Similarly: 'wan**ted**' – it is impossible for us to blend 't' with 'd'.]*

Goal: nearest **vowel** or **friendly con sound**

Problem – CV connection:

mo **o** v **ed** CV **it**

Action 1: move forward d:


mo **o** v **ed** CV **it**


Problem – CC connection:

mo **o** v CC **dit**

('e' is a silent letter, so it does not concern us here)

Action 2: move forward v:

mo **o** v CC **dit**


Result:

mo **o** VC **vdit**

Action 3: voiced consonant **v** changes to unvoiced consonant **f** in a CC connection.

Result: VC connection:

mo **o** VC **fdit**

Examples of **blends** caused by **regular verbs** ending in '-ed'

| | ACTIONS: | 1 | 2 | 3 | Result: |
|----|---------------------|----------|----------|-------------|----------------|
| CV | ask ed it | mf d | mf k | mf s | a skdit |
| CC | ask ed the | del d | mf k | mf s | a skthe |
| CV | hop ed a | mf d | mf p | | ho pda |
| CC | hop ed they | del d | mf p | | ho pthey |
| CV | join ed in | mf d | | | join din |
| CC | join ed them | del d | | | join them |
| CV | look ed at | mf d | mf k | | loo kdat |
| CC | look ed for | del d | mf k | | loo kfor |
| CV | mov ed it | mf d | mf v | change to f | mo fdit |
| CC | mov ed to | del d | mf v | change to f | mo fto |
| CV | pass ed it | mf d | mf s | | pa sdit |
| CC | pass ed the | del d | mf s | | pa sthe |

Summary of actions:

- The first action is to move forward d in a CV connection: **joined in > join din** and to delete d in a CC connection: **joined them > join them**. (Note: we rely on the context of the conversation to know the tense.)
- Then we move forward any remaining consonant sound(s). If we still have a CC connection, we keep moving forward: **asked it > ask dit > as kdit > a skdit**.
- If we move forward a voiced consonant sound in a CC connection, we change it to unvoiced: **moved it > mo fdit**

Quiz

#1. True or false? It is easy for us to pronounce the sounds t and d together in a blend: td.

- a) True
- b) False

#2. When I look at the phrase 'moved it' I immediately see a problem due to the _____ connection.

- a) CC
- b) VV
- c) CA
- d) CV

#3. In the phrase 'looked for', there are _____ unhelpful consonant sounds to deal with before I can get to the vowel sound – uu – that I need for a VC connection.

- a) three
- b) many
- c) two
- d) four

#4. In each phrase in this unit, the letter 'e' before 'd' is a _____ letter.

- a) singular
- b) silent
- c) friendly
- d) pronounced

#5. _____ verbs will always cause a problem in connected speech because they all end in a (non-friendly) _____ sound and we need a _____ sound – or friendly consonant sound – at the end of a syllable.

- a) Regular, vowel, consonant
- b) Irregular, consonant, vowel
- c) Regular, consonant, vowel
- d) A few, consonant, vowel

Practice

1. Try saying the regular verbs that end with t or d in the past form, without the schwa sound, so that you have to try to blend 'd' with 'd' – e.g., in 'added' – and blend 't' with 'd' – e.g., in 'wanted'. [Listen to the recording to see how difficult it is.](#)
2. Practice following and saying out loud the transition with 'moved it' on p.183. Say each stage out loud. Make sure you understand what is happening and why. [Listen to the recording](#) if you have any doubts.
3. Practice saying the phrases in the table on p.184 out loud, going from bad connection to good. Notice the actions and practice the interim stages. Notice the relative frequency of each action, i.e., we move forward the most. Add the phrases to your own sentences; practice them out loud. Record them, slow them down, and listen to your sound connections – then get a partner or teacher to check your pronunciation.
4. Focus on the summary of actions on p.184. Make sure that you understand these important rules. Learn the facts of connected speech so well that you remember them and are able to implement them naturally, and, ultimately, automatically while you are speaking.
5. Find a [list of regular verbs in English](#), choose five with blends – e.g., 'helped' – and five without – e.g., 'shared'. Put them into phrases with CC connections, e.g., 'helped me'. What actions do you have to take to get the necessary VC or friendly connection? Practice them out loud. Put them into sentences and practice saying them a few times. Regular verbs occur very often in English, so get used to dealing with the awkward connections that are made when they meet other consonant sounds, e.g., 'asked the' loses the d, then k and s move forward to result in the much easier to pronounce 'a skthe'.

Further Study

- [Regular Verbs](#)

Unit 8.8 Conclusion

When it comes to **multiple actions**, we must follow the conventions established by this course:

- **move forward** (most of the actions)
- **delete** t, d, h, and duplicate sounds, when necessary
- **add** w, y, and r in VV connections, when necessary
- **add** glottal stops. We add a glottal stop when t is deleted next to a vowel sound or friendly consonant sound. In other words, when we can no longer move forward or delete another sound
- **change** voiced consonant sounds to unvoiced, when necessary

There is nothing else. That is what we do. We are **ruthless** with consonant sounds. We delete them and move them forward to get to the next vowel or friendly consonant sound. Let's go back to our original example in [Unit 8.1](#):

| | |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| | 'facts were' |
| 1. mf z | fact z were |
| 2. z changes to s | fact s were |
| 3. delete t in CC | fac s were |
| 4. mf k | fa c swere |

Don't forget that the word 'were' is reduced to its **weak form**: w, with an **embedded schwa sound**. So, the phrase sounds like this:

Fa ksw The facts were clear. / th Fa ksw Kliy.

It does not look like English, and perhaps it does not sound like English to you, but that is how we pronounce it. The a of 'facts' is emphasised, isolated from the subsequent consonant sounds.

The vowel sound a is now clearer to the listener. It is an invaluable part of the **sound spine**:

a iy
The **facts** were **clear**.

The hard consonant sound t is removed, and k is separated from the a. Leaving these consonants in place as written **distracts** from the vowel sound a. The sound spine is: a, iy.

a iy
The **facts** were **clear**.

We may understand the sentence simply **from these vowel sounds plus the context**. The consonant sounds are not superfluous to the meaning, but they are *far less important* than the vowel sounds.

Surrounding a with consonant sounds **distracts** us from the all-important a.

It gets lost in between various hard consonant sounds:

FACTSWERE

The a needs to have space to sing out loudly in the **sound spine** like a bright bell:

f A ksw

The facts were clear. / th Fa ksw Kliy.

Now imagine how it would sound if every stressed vowel sound that you said got **lost** between the unnecessary **clutter** of hard to pronounce consonant sounds:

DISASTER!

Do not underestimate what lengths we will go to in order to get to the **vowel sound** or **friendly consonant sound** that we need in order to make a **VC** or **friendly connection**. That is what this course is all about.

Remember that consonant sounds are **expendable**! They can be merged, squashed, reduced, and deleted in order to make the **sound spine** heard.

A clear correct **sound spine** is the most important part of speaking English, because without it your message could be **lost**.

So, learn how to **move forward**, **delete**, **add**, and **change** consonant sounds, while **emphasising the sound spine**, and you will speak English more like a native speaker!

Quiz

#1. It takes _____ actions to get from 'facts were' to a _____ connection.

- a) two, VC
- b) four, CV
- c) five, VC
- d) four, VC

#2. Leaving _____ sounds next to the _____ sound in a syllable _____ from the _____ sound.

- a) consonant, vowel, emphasises, vowel
- b) consonant, vowel, distracts, vowel
- c) consonant, consonant, distracts, vowel
- d) consonant, vowel, distracts, friendly

#3. It is possible to understand the _____ of a sentence simply by hearing the _____ and knowing the _____.

- a) meaning, sound spine, context
- b) context, meaning, sound spine
- c) length, sound spine, context
- d) meaning, weak forms, context

#4. It is easy to misunderstand somebody who does not use connected speech because _____.

- a) they do not pronounce the r sound correctly
- b) it is hard to hear the sound spine due to many unnecessary vowel sounds
- c) it is hard to hear the sound spine due to stress on the stressed syllables
- d) it is hard to hear the sound spine due to many unnecessary consonant sounds

#5. Native speakers will gladly move forward, delete, add, and change consonant sounds in order to _____, and, in consequence, _____ the sound spine.

- a) get CV or friendly connections, accentuate
- b) sound unnatural, accentuate
- c) get VC or friendly connections, accentuate
- d) get VC or friendly connections, diminish

Discussion

1. How do you feel about consonant sounds being 'expendable' in English? Are they expendable in your L1? Do you believe that vowel and consonant sounds should have equal status in English speech? Give reasons. If you still feel like that after completing this course, it may be worth going back to revise a few of the key points!
2. The course has almost finished. Has your spoken English improved by following this course? In what way(s)? What have you learned? What have you enjoyed doing the most? What do you need to go back and revise? Have you been surprised in any way? How much progress have you made? Has anybody commented on improvements in your spoken English? What has been the most difficult part of the course for you? What has been straightforward? Would you recommend this course? Would you consider repeating the course?

Practice

1. Read the list of actions at the top of p.186. Think of five new phrases for each action and practice them out loud, focusing on making the action seem as unobtrusive as possible – all the time emphasising the vowel sounds, rather than the consonant sounds. Put some of your phrases into sentences and practice them out loud. Record, slow down, and check your pronunciation. Ask a friend or teacher to listen to you and give you feedback. Add glottal stops when necessary and change consonant sounds moving forward when required.
2. Practice making the transitions in the phrase 'facts were' on p.186. Say each stage out loud. Make sure that you reduce the word 'were' to simply w + schwa sound. Find out what an [embedded schwa sound](#)¹ is.
3. Remind yourself about [the schwa sound](#) and why it is so important to English pronunciation.
4. Read the phrase 'facts were' at the top of p.187. Practice this phrase along with the whole sentence: 'The facts were clear'. Make sure 'were' is reduced to w + schwa sound. Try to make the a sound 'sing out loudly ... like a bright bell'.

Further Study

- [The Schwa Sound](#)
- [The Sound Spine](#)
- [Clear Alphabet](#)

¹ When pronounced on their own, all consonant sounds (including unvoiced) are followed by a schwa sound. This is called an embedded schwa sound. For example, the word doctor, which has a strong first syllable and a weak second syllable – with t + schwa sound – is represented like this: Do kt. [[Lesson 1.6 Clear Alphabet - PurlandTraining.com](#)]

Answers to quizzes

Learn Connected Speech

Answers to quizzes

Lesson 1: Introduction

- 30 Unit 1.1 1. b) 2. d) 3. c) 4. b) 5. b)
- 32 Unit 1.2 1. a) 2. b) 3. a) 4. d) 5. c)
- 35 Unit 1.3 1. a) 2. d) 3. a) 4. b) 5. d)
- 37 Unit 1.4 1. c) 2. b) 3. d) 4. b) 5. d)
- 40 Unit 1.5 1. b) 2. d) 3. c) 4. b) 5. d)

Lesson 2: VC Connections

- 44 Unit 2.1 1. c) 2. b) 3. b) 4. a) 5. d)
- 47 Unit 2.2 1. a) 2. a) 3. d) 4. b) 5. c)
- 51 Unit 2.3 1. c) 2. a) 3. d) 4. a) 5. a)
- 54 Unit 2.4 1. b) 2. c) 3. a) 4. b) 5. c)
- 56 Unit 2.5 Reduplicatives – Quiz 1

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| 1. argy-bargy | <i>noun</i> | <i>argument</i> |
| 2. boohoo | <i>exclamation</i> | <i>crying</i> |
| 3. boogie-woogie | <i>noun</i> | <i>dance</i> |
| 4. bow-wow | <i>exclamation</i> | <i>dog noise</i> |
| 5. bye-bye | <i>exclamation</i> | <i>farewell</i> |
| 6. easy-peasy (lemon squeezy) | <i>adjective</i> | <i>not difficult</i> |
| 7. goody-goody | <i>noun</i> | <i>too perfect</i> |
| 8. ha ha! | <i>exclamation</i> | <i>laughter</i> |
| 9. hoity-toity | <i>adjective</i> | <i>stuck up</i> |
| 10. lovey-dovey | <i>adjective</i> | <i>romantic</i> |

- 56 Unit 2.5 Reduplicatives – Quiz 2

- | | | |
|------------------|--------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. roly-poly | <i>adjective</i> | <i>overweight</i> |
| 2. seesaw | <i>noun</i> | <i>children's play equipment</i> |
| 3. shilly-shally | <i>verb</i> | <i>be indecisive</i> |
| 4. super-duper | <i>adjective</i> | <i>fantastic</i> |
| 5. teeny-weeny | <i>adjective</i> | <i>very small</i> |
| 6. wakey-wakey | <i>exclamation</i> | <i>a new day</i> |
| 7. walkie-talkie | <i>noun</i> | <i>communication device</i> |
| 8. willy-nilly | <i>adverb</i> | <i>carelessly</i> |
| 9. wishy-washy | <i>adjective</i> | <i>ineffectual</i> |
| 10. yoo-hoo! | <i>exclamation</i> | <i>hello</i> |

- 57 Unit 2.5 1. d) 2. a) 3. b) 4. c) 5. b)

Learn Connected Speech

Answers to quizzes

Lesson 3: Friendly Connections

| | | |
|----|----------|-------------------------------|
| 61 | Unit 3.1 | 1. b) 2. c) 3. a) 4. b) 5. b) |
| 64 | Unit 3.2 | 1. d) 2. a) 3. b) 4. d) 5. c) |
| 67 | Unit 3.3 | 1. b) 2. b) 3. d) 4. c) 5. b) |
| 70 | Unit 3.4 | 1. a) 2. f) 3. e) 4. b) 5. e) |
| 73 | Unit 3.5 | 1. a) 2. b) 3. d) 4. c) 5. d) |

Lesson 4: Moving Forward – Part 1

| | | |
|----|----------|---------------------------------------|
| 76 | Unit 4.1 | 1. b) 2. d) 3. d) 4. b) 5. c) |
| 79 | Unit 4.2 | 1. c) 2. d) 3. c), f), h) 4. a) 5. b) |
| 83 | Unit 4.3 | 1. d) 2. a) 3. d) 4. b) 5. c) |
| 86 | Unit 4.4 | 1. b) 2. d) 3. b), f), h) 4. b) 5. c) |
| 88 | Unit 4.5 | 1. c), e), g) 2. b) 3. d) 4. b) 5. a) |
| 91 | Unit 4.6 | 1. b) 2. b) 3. d) 4. c) 5. a), c) |
| 93 | Unit 4.7 | 1. a) 2. b) 3. b) 4. a), c), d) 5. c) |

Lesson 5: Moving Forward – Part 2

| | | |
|-----|----------|---------------------------------------|
| 96 | Unit 5.1 | 1. b) 2. a) 3. d) 4. b) 5. a) |
| 99 | Unit 5.2 | 1. b) 2. a) 3. b) 4. d) 5. b) |
| 102 | Unit 5.3 | 1. a), b) 2. b) 3. a) 4. b) 5. c) |
| 105 | Unit 5.4 | 1. c) 2. b) 3. b) 4. a) 5. b), d), g) |
| 107 | Unit 5.5 | 1. c) 2. b) 3. b) 4. d) 5. c) |
| 110 | Unit 5.6 | 1. c) 2. a), c) 3. b) 4. a) 5. c) |
| 114 | Unit 5.7 | 1. c) 2. d) 3. b) 4. b) 5. d) |
| 117 | Unit 5.8 | 1. c) 2. b) 3. d) 4. c) 5. b) |

Learn Connected Speech

Answers to quizzes

Lesson 6: Deleting Sounds

| | | |
|-----|----------|---|
| 121 | Unit 6.1 | 1. b), d) 2. b) 3. a) 4. a) 5. d) |
| 126 | Unit 6.2 | 1. c) 2. d) 3. b) 4.c) 5. a) |
| 131 | Unit 6.3 | 1. b) 2. a) 3. c), d) 4. c) 5. a) |
| 135 | Unit 6.4 | 1. b), d), e) 2. c) 3. a) 4. a), c), f) 5. b) |
| 140 | Unit 6.5 | 1. b) 2. b), d) 3. a), b), e) 4. d) 5. b), d) |

Lesson 7: Adding Sounds

| | | |
|-----|----------|---|
| 144 | Unit 7.1 | 1. b) 2. d) 3. a) 4. a) 5. a), d), e) |
| 149 | Unit 7.2 | 1. c) 2. a), b), d), f), g) 3. b) 4.c) 5. d) |
| 153 | Unit 7.3 | 1. b), d) 2. a), d) 3. c) 4. b), d), f), h) 5. c), f) |
| 155 | Unit 7.4 | 1. c), f) 2. c) 3. b), e) 4. c), f) 5. b) |
| 158 | Unit 7.5 | 1. c) 2. d) 3. a), c), f) 4. b) 5. a), d) |

Lesson 8: Multiple Actions

| | | |
|-----|----------|--|
| 162 | Unit 8.1 | 1. a) 2. b) 3. c) 4. a) 5. b) |
| 165 | Unit 8.2 | 1. a) 2. d) 3. b) 4.b), c), e), f) 5. b) |
| 170 | Unit 8.3 | 1. c) 2. b) 3. d) 4. b) 5. b) |
| 175 | Unit 8.4 | 1. d) 2. b) 3. c) 4. a) 5. b) |
| 178 | Unit 8.5 | 1. d) 2. a) 3. a) 4. b) 5. c) |
| 181 | Unit 8.6 | 1. d) 2. b) 3. a) 4. d) 5. b) |
| 184 | Unit 8.7 | 1. b) 2. d) 3. c) 4. b) 5. c) |
| 187 | Unit 8.8 | 1. d) 2. b) 3. a) 4. d) 5. c) |

The complete programme for learning connected speech



You too can learn to speak English like a native speaker, using the four actions of connected speech:

- moving forward
- deleting sounds
- adding sounds
- changing sounds

It really isn't rocket science!

You just need to **believe** in the power of connected speech!

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